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L E T T E R S,

U P O N

SUBJECTS OF LITERATURE.

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# LETTERS,

ADDRESSED CHIEFLY TO

A YOUNG GENTLEMAN,

U P O N

## Subjects of Literature:

Including a TRANSLATION of

EUCLID'S SECTION OF THE CANON;

AND HIS TREATISE ON HARMONIC;

With an EXPLANATION of the GREEK

## MUSICAL MODES,

According to the Doctrine of PTOLEMY.

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BY CHARLES DAVY, M. A.

RECTOR OF ONEHOUSE, IN SUFFOLK.

---

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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BURY ST. EDMUND'S.

Printed for the Author, by J. RACKHAM; and sold by Messrs.  
PAYNE and SON, at the Mews-Gate; T. and J. MERRILL,  
in Cambridge; R. BEATNIFFE, in Norwich;  
and R. CRUTTWELL, Bath.

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MDCCLXXXVII.

Τὸ μὲν τῆς φωνῆς μέλος [λέγω δὲ ὅτι τῆς ὠδικῆς  
ἄλλὰ τῆς ψιλλῆς] καὶ ἡδὲως διατιθῇ τὴν ἀκοήν,  
εὐμελὲς λέγοιτο ἂν, εἰ ὅτι ἐμμελές.

Διον. συν. Ρημ.



## ADVERTISEMENT.

**I**F the *Subjects* of the Letters here submitted to the Public, want the charm of Novelty to recommend them, they may, nevertheless, contain some *Observations* which are neither common, nor unworthy of attention. Many things at least are brought together, which lie scattered and dispersed in different volumes, not always readily to be met with; and the compiler trusts, that they are either placed in a new light, or that he hath given them more distinction, by clearing away a portion of the weeds, and antique

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rubbish, which darkened, or concealed them. Most of these little Essays, as they have been called, were written many years ago; they have been collected chiefly from detached Papers, and revised for publication, as a relief to the Author's mind, during a confinement now of more than eighteen months continuance.

It seemed good to the Supreme Disposer of all things, to reduce him in a moment by an apoplectic stroke, from the most perfect state of health and cheerfulness amidst his friends, to a paralytic permanent debility; a debility which hath not only fixed him to his chair, but brought on spasms so exquisitely painful, and frequently so unremitted, as scarcely to allow a single hour's repose to him for many days and nights together. Under the pressure of these afflictions, God hath graciously been pleased to continue to him his accustomed flow of spirits, and to preserve,

serve his Memory and his Understanding in some degree of vigour. These alleviating blessings, have enabled him to borrow pleasure from past times, in support of the present; to call back the delightful and instructing conversations he enjoyed, in a society of worthy and ingenious Friends, and to resume those studies and amusements, which rendered the former part of his life happy: should the more enlightened Reader receive any entertainment from disquisitions, which were written principally for younger minds, the Author's end will be *doubly* answered; the idea of having contributed, though but in a slight degree, to increase the satisfactions of the Public, will enlarge his own; and he declines soliciting any other favour from those of higher attainments in *Learning* and *Science*, who may have a thought of perusing these volumes, than that they will preserve a

*disposition* to be pleased, whatever errors they shall meet with in them, will thereby stand a fairer chance to be excused, and the ingenuous scholar, however eminently distinguished, cannot fail, at all events, to be rewarded for his condescension, in that calm composure and tranquillity of mind, which naturally arises from the cherishing an habitual sweetness of temper; and in the actual exercise of candour and forbearance, which distinguishes, or rather constitutes, the Gentleman.

Applause, or censure, as a *writer*, at the Author's time of life, cannot possibly affect him greatly: at sixty-five years of age, and with his afflictions and infirmities, these things are truly and *emphatically*, what the sublime Preacher styles the *vanity* even of Vanities; yet still amidst his higher and his more important cares, he entertains a wish, that he may not *displease* such persons, as he is unqualified



lified by his Learning or Abilities to instruct. He would apologize for a want of order and arrangement; for the inaccuracy of his Language in many places; for his omitting to enlarge upon some curious subjects; and for his digressing frequently into others, not extremely interesting, upon very slight connections, which is the natural infirmity of his mind; but he discerns the folly of apologies, in cases of this sort.

The candid reader will reflect to whom most of the Letters were originally addressed, and make all due allowances on that account. Errors of the press are absolutely unavoidable at a distance from it, and the Author is persuaded, that none of great importance have fallen from his pen, but if in this respect he should haply be deceived, he is sorry for it, and trusts, they are excusable upon the score of human weakness and inadvertency, against

which, we cannot always be sufficiently guarded.

His account of the græcian Music, so far as it is taken from Euclid, may be depended on, as a faithful translation of the great Geometrician's Treatises upon the subject, and he has inserted nothing concerning the Modes, from any other Essay, without consulting the original musical writers themselves, and comparing different Harmonicians together, in order to explain their use and application, which, the Tables he has added will, as he presumes, sufficiently illustrate and establish.

The Letter from Lisbon, which the Publisher may praise, without vanity, cannot be too highly spoken of, as it contains, perhaps the fullest, and the most affecting, as well as the most authentic narrative of the terrible destruction of that grand and populous City, which hath yet been laid before the Public.

To

To close this tedious Advertifement, if upon a careful review of the whole together, the writer fhould discover any grofs and capital Miftakes, he will acknowledge and endeavour to correct them in a Poftfcript to each volume; and he fhall feel a higher fatisfaction in fo doing, than he fhould have in their paffing wholly unobferved by others, if fuch an incident could be fupposed to happen under the infpection of a fet of Gentlemen, who, by Profeflion, are *impartial* Critics for the Public, albeit their Judgment, as he hath experienced, inclines them to the fide of candour.

ONEHOUSE, Feb. 25, 1787.

CON-





CONCIONATOR PRINCEPS USU ET DIVINITUS  
SAPIENS, FILIO SUO.

FRUERE Adolescentia tua Fili mi dilecte,  
Et hilari mente carpe delicias breves,  
Dum nitet adhuc purpureum Juventæ Lumen;  
Et Vere novo Rosæ floreat in genis.

*At memento Creatoris tui, dum lætare :*

Cum nondum Hyemis descendant imbres,  
Accedantve tristium annorum Tempora,  
Quibus te omnino delectari neges.

Antequam tenebrescat Solis lux, & labente die,  
Palleat vicissim Luna; et rutilo splendore Poli  
Deficiente, Siderei restinguantur Ignēs.  
Necdum redierint post pluviam nimborum procellæ  
Aut cana nive cooperiantur Montes.

Antequam tremiscent Ædium Custodes,  
Nec diutius vacillantes jam columnæ  
Molem superpositam sustentare queant;  
Nec ealigarunt per fenestras speculantes :  
Matutinos avium dum cantus continuent somnos,  
Nec usque filebunt dulcis Musices puellæ.

Memor esto Creatoris tui Juvenis ætate virens,  
Ante Amicorum monumenta quam te vocent,  
Domicilium ad commune sæculorum,  
Lugentibus in vico inaniter Pullatis :

Dum

Dum nec argentei laxentur Funes,  
 Neque aureus quassetur Calix,  
 Nec Rota circumvolvi fracta Situla § cessabit :  
 Redeatq; Pulvis in Humum, unde olim *est*.  
 Et Spiritus *ad Deum qui, afflavit.*

§ Ad Rotam Ægyptiacam respicere videtur Rex sapientissimus, urceis sive fitulis fictilibus curvamini affixis, quo Haustri genere etiam hodie ab antiquissimis temporibus, aquam ex puteolis per agros fulcis derivare solent Niliginæ, nec cuivis eximiam hujus tropicæ Locutionis congruentiam attendenti, in dubium venire potest, circumfluum Sanguinis ambitum Concionatori divino quodammodo innotuisse.



# L E T T E R S.

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## L E T T E R I.

October, 1773.

**I** AM not at all surprized, my dear Charles, that you complain of difficulties in learning the formation of the Greek verbs; and that you do not understand what are the powers of their tenses; these things not having been so well explained, perhaps, in any of the grammars published for the use of schools, as they might have been: there are defects, re-

B                      undances,

dundances, and obscurities in all those which I have perused, and I have looked over a great number. In truth, it must be an exceeding difficult task to execute a work of this sort, without contracting, or enlarging it too much; and some obscurities are absolutely unavoidable, so that a great deal will remain to be explained, or supplied, by the master in his course of teaching. I am afraid I can give you very little assistance, but I shall write down a few observations which occurred to me, or were collected many years since in the course of my own studies, and leave you to make what advantage of them you are able.

In the first place, I would not have you discouraged at the number of conjugations, because there is so much of analogy between them, that they may be all reduced to two; namely, one of such verbs as end in *ω*, and the other of such as end in *μν*.

By



By the term Conjugation, I apprehend to have been originally understood, and which is its true meaning, either an application of the same word to different persons and times, or the adjoinment of such letters or syllables to the original elements, or radical letters, of which a verb consists, as may point out what connection, the action signified by it, hath with different persons, as expressing or exerting different energies of the *Mind* and *Will*, together with the differences of *Time*. And this seems to me to belong to *Moods* and *Tenses*, rather than to what is generally meant by Conjugation: but it is not to be understood from this definition of *conjugation*, that *every* letter of which a verb originally consists is always retained, under all the changes to which it is liable; in some instances these radical letters are *all* of them omitted, and others substituted in their places; though they are, in general, retained by most verbs under every

change of termination; as an example of the original letters being *all* omitted, you may take the present participle of the verb *εἰμι*, which is *ων, ουσα, ον*: and as an example where they are in general retained, let us take the verb *τερπω* the first in the list of those which your grammar calls the first conjugation of *barytones*, that is, of those verbs in the utterance of which the voice is lowered upon the last syllable. Now, the original letters of which this verb consists, are *τ, ε, ρ, π*, which you will find in almost every tense and person, of every mood, of the active voice, [except that the vowel *εψιλον* is changed into alpha to distinguish the second aorist from the imperfect tense.] These letters, *τ, ε, ρ, π*, may, therefore, very properly be called its *Radicals*, as those which are changed in conjugating, and made use of only to point out the connections above mentioned, with different

ferent persons, energies, and times, may not less properly be denominated *Serviles*; you will, of course, apply this distinction of *radical* and *servile* letters to all other verbs, and be particularly careful to fix the termination of every person in every mood, tense, and number of the substantive verb  $\epsilon\iota\mu\iota$  in your memory, which will greatly lessen the difficulty of which you complain. I once thought that an omega singly added to the radical letters of a verb, might be a part of the pronoun  $\epsilon\gamma\omega$ , to indicate or declare, that I, myself, personally exerted that act, either of mind or body, which is expressed by the *radical* letters of a verb; but upon more mature consideration, I take this  $\omega$ , to be the last letter of the existing verb (which was originally written  $\epsilon\omega$ ,  $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ ,  $\epsilon\iota$ , instead of  $\epsilon\iota\mu\iota$ ,  $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ ,  $\epsilon\iota$ ,) than a part of the pronoun: it is thus that  $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  added to the radicals, intimates the second person singular to be

the agent, as *τερπω*, *τερπ-εις* ; and in all inflections of the root, the terminations are generally formed by some part of this primitive verb, which together with the root, or some letters of it, expresses the state and condition, or the manner, in which any person or thing either *exists*, or is acting. At what period the terminating *ω* was changed for that of *μι*, or for what reasons, in this substantive verb, I am not able to say, but for the fact refer you to your Scapula's Lexicon. Leaving then this matter to be determined by persons who think it worth while to enquire into the causes, and to settle the date of the change or termination from *ωμεγα* to *μι*, it may be proper to acquaint you, that the four conjugations of verbs in *μι*, are only some *few* verbs which have the last syllable of this existing verb in *μι*, instead of *ω* ; occasioning a difference chiefly in three tenses ; and your grammar tells you, that

that these verbs are all derived from verbs of the sixth conjugation, namely, from such as have a vowel before the *ωμεγα*; as are likewise the three conjugations of the contracted verbs, so that there is, in reality, no other distinction of conjugations than that which I have given in the definition of it; and, which is more applicable, in my opinion, as I have hinted, to moods and tenses, than to what are *called* conjugations by grammarians, which are only certain classes of verbs that agree in the manner of those changes from their respective roots to which they are liable. Should you now ask me, upon what principle grammarians proceeded to determine the number of what they chose to call conjugations in the barytones; you must have recourse to the organic division of the alphabet into *vowels*, *half vowels*, and *consonants*, and of these last into *labials*, *palatines*, and *linguals*. Now the



*final* letter of the *root* of any verb which comes before the fervile letter  $\omega$ , or the letters  $\omicron\mu\alpha\iota$ , called its characteristic, *must* of necessity, be taken from one of these classes; that is, it must either be a vowel, or a half vowel; or if a consonant, it must be either a *labial*, or a *palatine*, or a *lingual*: if it were a *labial*, they said it was of the first conjugation; if a *palatine*, of the second; and, if a *lingual*, of the third; if two sigmas, two taus, or ds, which is the power of z, preceded  $\omega$ , or  $\omicron\mu\alpha\iota$ , they said it was of the fourth conjugation, if a half vowel of the fifth, and if a perfect vowel or diphthong of the sixth. The contracted verbs, of which they made three conjugations, differed from verbs of the sixth, only in some few tenses, in like manner as the verbs in  $\mu\iota$  do, as I have said before; and these raised the whole number of conjugations to thirteen; namely, six of the barytones, three of the contracted verbs in  $\epsilon\omega$ ,  $\alpha\omega$ , and  $\omicron\omega$ ; and four of the verbs



verbs in  $\mu$ . The *characteristic* letters (as they are not improperly called) thus distinguish the roots of verbs into several classes, but this division of them without any reasons assigned for it in the grammar, serves rather to perplex the scholar by an air of mystery, than to instruct him. Of the two leading tenses, namely, the first future and the perfect, or completive tense active, from which all the rest are derived, the former always ends in  $\sigma\omega$ , except in verbs of the fifth class; and the latter in  $\kappa\alpha$  with the  $\kappa\alpha\pi\pi\alpha$  either soft or aspirated, or in  $\alpha\lambda\phi\alpha$  with the aspirated  $\pi$ , that is, it ends either in  $\phi\alpha$  or in  $\chi\alpha$ , sounded hard, with ch or kh. When I say that the first future always had sigma preceding  $\omega\mu\epsilon\gamma\alpha$ , you will recollect, that sigma is a part of the double letters  $\psi$  and  $\xi$ , that is of  $\pi\varsigma$  and  $\kappa\varsigma$ , or, as some think, *perhaps* more properly of  $\gamma\sigma$ . In all languages the vowels are frequently used for each

each other, and you may rely upon it as a rule, (though not without exceptions,) that a change of consonants in the formation of Greek verbs, is generally between letters of the same organ. If these several classes of verbs are still to be called conjugations, I have mistaken the meaning of the term. The Romans formed their verbs after the same manner as the Greeks, with respect to the additional parts of the auxiliary verb to the radical letters; but the grammarians, who compiled what we call the *Accidence*, were satisfied with four conjugations only, whereas they might have multiplied the number of conjugations if they had considered these organical divisions of the alphabet, as answering any other purpose, than that of pointing out sometimes the change of one letter for another, in order to avoid a disagreeable sound, or to facilitate the pronunciation of a word. You  
 hinted,

hinted, that several authors, whom you have occasionally looked into, have affirmed the Roman language to be very much inferior to the Greek; if I remember right, Cicero was of a different opinion; but be that as it may, the superiority of the Greek tongue, above the Roman, was not owing to the number of its conjugations, [as they are reckoned up in our grammars,] by which its verbs were distinguished into classes, but chiefly to the various powers of the verbal tenses, to the richness and propriety of its expression, to the manly strength or sweetness of its rythmus, and, finally, to the tones and melody of its pronunciation; the last of which, after the states of Greece fell under the power of the Romans, was *attempted* to be preserved by accentual marks to point out *the rise and fall of the voice in utterance*; but the use of these being mistaken by several very learned  
and

and ingenious men, they have not answered their intention, for having been looked upon, either as denoting the quantity or length of syllables, or otherwise as marks of emphasis; or haply, as *mere musical* notes, (an error which these gentlemen were led into by the term *προσῳδαί*) an application of the accentual characters instead of preserving the antient manner of pronunciation, hath, on the contrary, become an occasion of the grossest barbarism in this respect. It may be observed, that notes are applicable to our speech in common conversation, as well as song; for singing, is but speaking in a more extended scale, and in which the tones are so distinct, that we perceive where one note ends, and another begins; whereas in conversation, the notes rise and fall into each other *imperceptibly*, till the voice entirely stops; these two different movements of the voice were, therefore, termed

termed by the antients the species of continuous, and the species of divided notes ;

δύω τινες εἰσιν ἰδεαὶ κινήσεως, saith Aristox-

enus ; συνεχῆς καὶ διασηματικῆ ; ὅξυ δὲ καὶ

βαρὺ δῆλον, ὥς ἐν ἀμφοτέραις ἐστὶ. There

can be no doubt but that acuteness and gravity must *necessarily* belong to them

both ; φυσικὸν γὰρ τὸ ἐπιτείνειν καὶ ἀνιέναι

ἐν τῷ διαλεγέσθαι ; it is, indeed, so far *na-*

*tural*, that no person can utter five syllables together at the *same* pitch of voice,

at least without the utmost difficulty. I quote by memory only from the first book

of Aristoxenus, and shall trouble you no more upon this subject at present, as

it is not strictly connected to that with which we set out ; though I may, per-

haps, hereafter take it up again and enlarge upon it. But remember, in the

mean time, if you should be asked which is the most proper method of reading

Greek, by accent only, or by quantity

without



without accents, that it is a question to which no reasonable answer can be given. It is not less absurd, than to ask whether it is most adviseable to sing in tune only without time, or in time without tune.

I am, &c.

LETTER



## L E T T E R II.

MY DEAR C.

THIS letter, contrary to your expectation and my own intention when I wrote last, will be upon the subject of Music. I have been led to it by a very slight connection, the accentual marks; but even the Theory of Music is so exceedingly entertaining, as I am studying a little of it with Mr. S. that it has taken full possession of my thoughts at present.

When we run over in our minds the great variety of languages there are in the world, it is astonishing to consider how they may all be rendered *visible*, and transferred, as it were, from *one sense* to *another*, by means of eighteen or twenty letters, for

no more  
are necessary.

and it is little less so, that all the variety of musical sounds with which we are so much charmed, are capable of being reduced to seven ; yet this is the case, for infinite almost as they may appear, there are no more in nature. Let us begin with what note we please, we can rise no higher than a seventh in an ascending series, nor can we descend lower from the same note ; the eighth above being only a replication \*

\* You will think, perhaps, the term replication of the *same* note is an expression not strictly just, for that the eighth is really different from its base note, though it approaches nearer to it than any other ; in fact, my dear C. no two things in nature, can be said to be the same, in any other sense, than as they agree in their qualities and relations ; but every eighth note hath the *same qualities*, and stands in the same relation to the seven succeeding notes of its octave, as its eighth below had to the seven above it ; or the eight below *that eighth* had to the succeeding seven ; this appears from what I have said above to be so extremely clear, that I ought, perhaps, to apologize for attempting to make it clearer.

of

of the first in a higher key, as the eighth below will be the same in a graver ; and it is as impossible to increase the number by the invention of an eighth note, which shall have a new harmonic relation to the rest, as to invent a new primary colour, or a sixth sense. This may be made mathematically certain, by considering the proportional divisions of any single musical string, to obtain the several lengths which are required to sound these seven natural notes ; add the ratios of these together, subdivide, multiply, or subtract them, as we please, no new ratios or proportionals will be produced, but only a replication of some former ratios, resolvable into those of the primary *octave*. The series of natural intervals might, indeed, have been extended to any indefinite number, suppose to the tenth note for instance, which would greatly have enlarged the compass both of our melody and our harmony ;

C

but

but then our organs of *hearing* must have been formed after a different manner from what they are ; the tenth *might* have approached nearest to unison with the first note, as the eighth now doth, which, at present, closes the whole system, and renders our music as complete as Providence intended it should be. It is in Music as in Painting, we may blend the original colours as much as we please together, but can go no farther towards the production of a new colour, all the possible variety of tints being only different combinations of the seven primary colours as they are separated by a prism ; and thus all the variety of melting sounds which enchant us, must consist in a different succession, or in the union of some of these seven natural notes, or their replications, such are the boundaries both of sight and hearing ! We are told, indeed, that in a future state our Allwise, Almighty, and Allgracious

Allgracious Father hath prepared such things for those that love him, as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have yet entered the heart of man; we shall then be furnished with new senses, if I may so call those powers of perception we are hereafter to be endued with, which may discover new beauties in every object around us: one single ray of light may be refracted into a thousand primary colours, and our powers of hearing be unrestrained by a shorter scale of notes: instead of seven, it may be extended to as many thousands, and our organs fitted to receive their impressions without the least confusion or impediment; but this world was made for man during a state of trial, and all his delights must be suited to his nature and employments under it. Greater and more exquisite pleasures would probably have taken us off from pursuing the necessary business of life, as less or



fewer would not have been a sufficient balance for the evils of it, and have rendered our condition uncomfortable and wretched; not to mention that such a delicacy of constitution, as would have been capable of receiving a multiplied variety of these more *exquisite* impressions would, in our present state, have been absolutely incompatible with the human frame, condemned as it is to labour, and to buffet with the fury of the elements. The impulse of a single sound, would have been a thunderbolt to such a texture; and one ray of light been sufficient to dash us to atoms—how wisely is every thing weighed in the balance of God! whose wisdom adjusted not only the proportions of the heavenly bodies, which principally attract our notice, but descended to the minutest circumstances in every article of our existence!

I am, my dear C.

Your's, &c.

L E T T E R



## LETTER III.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

PREVIOUS to our considering the powers of the *Tenses*, let me recal to your memory, that it is of the essence of a verb to signify either simply the *existence* of some being, or else the *energy* or *act* of some being, which may properly, in this case, be called the subject or *agent* of the verb. If the verb implies only mere existence, it is called the existing or substantive verb; if it expresses the action of its subject, it is called a verb active, or is said to be in the active voice; if the verb is expressive of some energy or act as suffered, or, in other words, in the reception

tion of which the *object* of the act was passive, it is then called a verb passive; or is said to be in the passive voice. But there is also what is called a middle verb in Greek, by which an action is represented as terminating or compleated in the agent, or rather, whose action falls back upon the agent; and this is the principal, though not the only use, of what is called the middle voice, in which most verbs are capable of being conjugated; thus *τερπω* in the active voice, signifies I entertain or delight, that is, I delight some other person or persons; *τερπομαι* in the passive voice, signifies I am delighted; and in the middle voice it signifies that I delight or entertain *myself*. Take another example, *ολλυμι*, I destroy, is active; *ολλυμαι*, I am destroyed, *passive*; and in the middle voice, it signifies, that I destroy myself. I may, in this place, observe farther to you, that the middle verbs an-  
swer,

swer, in some respects, to the French reciprocals, and that they have generally, though not always, an active signification in every tense except in the present and imperfect, in which tenses they *frequently* occur in a passive sense.

In the Hebrew, and, I presume, in other eastern languages, there is a *modal* termination that may be applied to all their verbs, which modal termination is significant of the energy's not passing beyond its agent, and acting upon the subject only which exerts it:—but I go on to the *Times*, or *Tenses*, which is the name by which our grammarians have thought proper to distinguish them, as respecting *all verbs whatever*. Every verb, as hath been said, must, of necessity, imply either the bare existence of a *Substance* or *Being*; or that an *action* is exerted by some Being; or that somewhat is passive in the reception of an action or effect: now as

nothing can *exist*, or can *act*, or be *acted* upon, but in time, the circumstance of time is *necessarily* connected with every species of verbs, and the differences of time *present, past, or future, long since, just now, soon, &c.* must either be expressed by a circumlocution, *or* by adding some letters to the root of the verb, or otherwise by taking away one or more of its radical letters from it; and it is this which gives that puzzling variety to the Greek verbs, the labour of understanding which you experience; but what is worse, the powers of these different and sometimes harsh, and rugged terminations having been left almost wholly unexplained, you are at a loss concerning their use and application. Before I come to a particular consideration of them (as it will take up some pages, which shall therefore be reserved for another Letter) it may not be improper to close *this* with a very short account of the *modes*.

The

The *Modes*, or *Moods* [as they are written] are certain modifications of those *words* emphatically called *verbs*, because without one of these, that is, without some *word* expressive either of existence or action, no compleat sentence can be formed. In order to express our different intentions of mind without a periphrasis, if we simply *declare*, or indicate, the termination of the verb is in the *Indicative* mode, or manner; if we *command*, in that which is called the *Imperative*; if we wish, in the *Optative*; and if we would intimate some contingency, in that mood which is usually called the *Subjunctive*. The Romans gave the same terminations to their verbs in the *mode* of wishing, which was called their optative mood, and to that which was called the potential, with the terminations of the subjunctive or contingent mood; whereas the Greeks made the first person singular in every tense of the optative



tative mood active, to end in  $\mu\iota$ ; as the first person of every tense of the subjunctive or contingent mood in the same voice, closed or ended in the double  $\sigma$ , or  $\omega\mu\epsilon\gamma\alpha$ ; and this latter mood in Greek, wants the future tenses in like manner as the *imperative* mood doth, though the imperative hath several others which seem not to have been absolutely necessary, for in the imperative mood of the Latins, one single termination was thought sufficient for all the tenses of it. In Greek, the imperative and subjunctive moods are both defective in the same tense, namely, the future; which is not the case in Latin, for the subjunctive mood in the Latin grammar has its distinct future. The reason why the imperative mood should be deficient in the future tenses, (for you will recollect, that in Greek there are two Future Tenses) is not very mysterious, for as much as it implies a futurity in its own nature, and,



and, properly speaking, can have no other than a future tense, for whatever is commanded to be done, must be done at a future time. The two completive or perfect tenses, therefore, seem to lose their nature in this mood, and imply nothing more than that the command given should be dispatched as soon as possible : thus the Romans had only *one* imperative tense, which they could not but understand as a future, respecting the action to be performed : when they wanted to urge the immediate performance of a command, they sometimes employed a particular adverb ; which seems as inconsistent with futurity, as the perfect and pluperfect tenses assigned to the imperative mood in Greek : *jamdudum sumite pœnas*, says Sinon, in Virgil ; Horace has, *jamdudum audio* ; Terence, *jamdudum ausculto* ; and the Pilot in Ovid calls out, *ardua jamdudum dimittite cornua*. Sinon's meaning

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2.  
1, 54

meaning is, *let my punishment be over*, as we should speak in English; and the Pilot's in the true stile of a commander at sea, *let the yard be lowered down before the command is out of my lips*. Having said thus much of the imperative, a very little reflection will point out to us, that the same reason which prevented the assignment of distinct future tenses to the *Imperative* mood, would equally take place in the *Subjunctive*, because, whatever is contingent, must imply a future time for its existence, no less than an action which is commanded or intreated; and, of course, that what you are told of the aoristic or indefinite tenses being used instead of its futures, hath a foundation in philosophic grammar. I foresee an objection to what has been said concerning this Rationale of the Greek tenses, that the optative mood hath both a first and second future; and, you may ask how  
it

it happened, that this mood should have them inserted, since wishing seems not less to imply a futurity in its own nature, than commanding and intreating, or than the circumstance of contingency; but to this, it will, perhaps, be sufficient to answer, that we may wish somewhat *to have been said, or to have been done*, at a time now *past*, which was not done, and, of course, is still in futurity; notwithstanding its implying an absurdity to order a thing to be said, or done, at a time *past*: and there was a sort of necessity for these tenses in the optative mood, upon that account. Although a wish for any act *to be* done, may *really* be subsequent to the act, yet it has a sort of priority in the mind of the person wishing, to the action which is, or may have been long since already past. If this will not account for introducing futures in the optative mood, I own myself wholly at a loss

loss how to do it. I am afraid I have expressed myself very inaccurately upon this difficulty, and had better have let it alone. With respect to the infinitive in Greek, it differs, in no respect, from the same mood in Latin, except in the aoristic tenses and a second future. I have now done with the Moods, only let me observe thus much farther concerning them, that they are *said* to be more frequently put one for the other in Greek than in Latin ; and it is supposed without transgressing the principles of the language : though it is not easy to account for its being done upon all occasions in either language. And, notwithstanding what is said of the *subjunctive* mood's being without the future tenses, which are supplied by the *aorists*, yet some instances of a subjunctive future, I believe, are to be met with. In the xviith chapter of St. John, verse the 2d, we read, δωση αυτοις

ζωην

ζωην αιωνιον; and in the vith to the Ephesians, ver. 3d, εση \* μακροχρονιος επι της γης, thou shalt be long lived upon the earth. In the 27th Idyl, line 1, Theocritus uses δωση a substantive future; *junctive* δειμαινω μη δε σε παλῳερι ανερι δωση, and more instances might be given from other Greek authors perhaps.

I am, &c.

\* P. S. εση μακροχρονιος, &c. it is true, may be construed indicatively, notwithstanding the conjunction which seems to require its being understood in the same mood with the preceding verb; let this example then be set aside; but several *different* copies read βληθηση in the 25th verse of the vth chap. of St. Matthew, and βληθης, as Pasor has remarked in his Lexicon; and the same author, under the word  
 κερσος,

κερσος, adds κερδηθησονται, (1 Pet. iii. 1.) is the first future subjunctive mood passive, of which I have observed many instances. Mr. Leed's, if I remember right, has mentioned several in his Greek grammar; but this is not a matter of any importance, for I have no doubt but what are called aorists in the subjunctive mood, are often, in reality, determinate *Futures*, and were so intended by the writers in whose works they occur.



## L E T T E R   I V .

MY DEAR C.

YOU seem to have been pleased with my letter upon musical sounds, which encourages me to continue the subject. That there is a strict analogy between sounds and colours, hath been hinted at least by Sir Isaac Newton, in his Optics : and I shall endeavour to give you some idea of it, by showing, that the distinction of colours is impressed on us under the same laws which take place in musical sounds ; forasmuch as the limits of the seven primary colours, namely, of the extreme red, of the red and orange, of the orange and yellow, of the yellow and green, of the green and blue, of the blue and indigo, of the indigo and

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violet, and of the extreme violet, are supposed by him to excite vibrations in the optic nerves, whose times correspond with the times of the vibrations of the parts of a musical string, as it is divided to found the notes of the octave D E F G A B C D, so that the times of the *vibrations* which give us the idea of *red*, to those which give us the idea of *orange*, are as eight to nine: the times of the vibrations which give us the idea of *red*, are to those which give us the idea of *yellow*, as 5 : 6; to those which give us the idea of *green*, as 3 : 4; to those which give us the idea of *blue*, as 2 : 3; to those which give us the idea of *indigo*, as 3 : 5; to those which give us the idea of *violet*, as 5 : 9; and to those which give us the idea of *extreme violet*, as 1 : 2; consequently the colours are in the following proportion to each other; *orange* to *red*, is as the interval of a *tone*; *yellow* to *red*, as a *flat third*; *green* to *red*, as a *fourth*; *blue*

*blue* to *red*, as a *fifth*; *indigo* to *red*, as a *sixth*; *violet* to *red*, as a *flat seventh*; and *extreme violet* to *red*, as an *eighth*. Now upon this it may be observed, that supposing the vibrations of *red* rays to be to those of *violet rays*, as 1 : 2, which is the ratio that exhibits the *octave* in sounds, one might expect to find the ratios expressive of the intermediate primary colours, corresponding in their order, to those of the musical sounds in a sharp or natural key; namely, to sounds in the key of C, rather than in the key of D; which, as it is not the case, this *somewhat* disconcerts that strict analogy between *sounds* and *colours*, which an observation of the extremes seemed to promise. But though we are unable to give a satisfactory reason why it should be so, it was undoubtedly necessary in some way or other, to answer a wise purpose of the infinitely Wise Creator: and if we may be allowed to conjecture, might it not be necessary, in order to produce

ideas so different as those of *sight* and *hearing* (whose objects act upon the senses by means of similar vibrations, ultimately meeting together, and frequently at the same instant in the same sensorium) to give them some distinctive character in their operation. Now, it is clear, that although the vibrations of sounds are limited within the same ratios as those of colours, yet as their order differs, they must produce effects, which, though *similar*, are yet characteristically distinct. How far Sir Isaac Newton's observations may be of use in establishing a certain Principle, for harmonizing the tints in painting, must be submitted to the artists. Do not let us forget to take an opportunity of consulting Mr. Woollett and Mr. Hearne upon the subject, when they come down in autumn.

I am, my dear C. &c.

LETTER

## L E T T E R V.

DEAR C.

**I** Design now to consider the powers of the nine several Greek tenses somewhat more particularly, which may be set down by their Latin names, as most familiar to you, and in the order they are mentioned in the Eton Grammar, immediately after the distinction of verbs into conjugations; namely, the

- |    |                     |   |
|----|---------------------|---|
| 1, | Tempus præsens,     | } |
| 2, | Imperfectum tempus, |   |
| 3, | Perfectum,          | } |
| 4, | Plusquam perfectum, |   |
| 5, | Aoristus primus,    | } |
| 6, | Aoristus secundus,  |   |

D 3

7, Futurum



- |    |                        |   |
|----|------------------------|---|
| 7, | Futurum primum,        | } |
| 8, | Futurum secundum,      |   |
|    | et                     |   |
|    | <i>in voce passiva</i> | } |
| 9, | Paulo post futurum.    |   |

where, by the way, I presume, that as Aoristus is made a Latin word, the two aorists should have been called Aoristum primum et Aoristum secundum; but this is a matter of no importance. Time in general is divided into that which is *now* present, or that which is already *past*, and that which is still future. As the shortest time consists in a succession of instants, strictly and philosophically speaking, there can be no such thing as time present: but this is not language used in teaching the elements of grammar. We may consider that portion of time which is begun, and not yet ended, as present, whether such a portion of it be long or short. It is thus we speak of the present minute,

or



or the present year, or the present century. For speech being adapted to the uses and conveniencies of human life, metaphysical niceties were very properly neglected in compleating the most polished languages: and as there can be no other distinctions of time, than into the present, the past, and the future, I trust it will soon appear to you, that the Greeks never attempted to puzzle out any other than these three, whatever the later grammarians have done. You will ask me how it comes to pass then, that your grammar reckons up not fewer than *nine* different tenses? This is the affair to be explained. Now each of the three tenses significant of the *present*, the *past*, and the *future time*, you will readily conceive may relate to an action *not yet finished and compleated*; or to an action which is already perfected and over: and in order to express these two different circumstances

of an action, with the connected times, the Greeks had *two present tenses*, two *past tenses*, and *two future tenses*, so that the reason for their inserting fix of the nine tenses is easily accounted for. Let us now consider the two aorists, whose nature is sufficiently hinted at in their names, which signify indefinite; and accordingly they are used for each of these three times, either for the present, the past, or the future, as it may be necessary, or requisite, at least, without particularly specifying, *what present*, *what past*; or *what future time* is to be understood; that is to say, they refer to any time which *was* or *may* be present, to any time which *has been*, or *may hereafter be past*, or to any time which may be considered only as *having been to come*, or which still may *really* be to come *hereafter*. You will, perhaps, object, that present time can surely never be aoristic or indefinite, though

though either that which is past, or that which is to come, may be so; a few examples will render this matter clear, as to the propriety of it; O fortunati Mercatores gravis annis miles ait; in this passage ait is, undoubtedly, an aoristic present; for the poet means a soldier at any time whatever. Again the same author says, Rectius Iliacum carmen deducis in actus quam si, &c. where deducis is as clearly an aoristic present, for it does not respect the present time only in which the poet was writing, but implies, that at *any* time it would be more adviseable to take a subject for tragedy from Homer, than one absolutely new; palam mutire, says Phædrus, plebeio est piaculum, that is, it always hath been, and now is, and always will be at any present time hereafter, a dangerous offence. Grammarians generally attribute past time to the aorists, or indefinite tenses; and they *are* usually so

so applied; they are said to be used for the *futures* also in the imperative and subjunctive moods, whenever a future tense in either of those moods is required; but it is a doubt with myself, whether the imperative mood ever does require an expressed future tense; and it hath been conjectured, that as past times, the aorists are applied after the same manner with the perfectum and plusquam perfectum of this mood, to intimate dispatch only, as hath been mentioned in a former letter; and though these tenses rarely occur at all in the *present* time, this application of them is not a solæcism. It is a sort of scholastic fashion to suppose the text of the Greek testament of doubtful authority in cases of this kind; but I think there is less objection to the instance I shall adduce from it, as the writer certainly was carried to the expression from no metrical inducement or necessity; the  
example

example is as follows, *ὥς φαίνει ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ*, (saith St. John) *καὶ ἡ κοτία εἰς κετέλαβεν αὐτὰ*, *Light shineth in darknes, and the darknes doth not admit it*; to this, however, may be added, from the first book of Homer, *ὅς κε θεοῖς ἐπιπείθῃται μάλα τ' ἔκλυον ἀυῖ*, in which *ἔκλυον*, the second aorist, may certainly have either a future or a present signification; and Dr. Clark translates it *exaudiunt*.

He who reveres the gods, him will they hear, or him do they immediately hear. I have one thing more to observe to you relative to the aorists; you must not conclude, whenever an undetermined time was meant, that the Greek writers always made use of an aoristic tense; or that they always avoided the application of these tenses where past time was intended with a precise determination.

The last tense of the nine is the paulo post futurum, which denotes an impending



impending action, that will very soon happen, and is used only in the passive voice, though there might have been an active tense of the same import; but as they did not assign a termination for it in this voice, they called in some assisting verb to answer the purpose, as *εἰμι* or *μελλω*; or made use of those verbs called *inceptives*, which are formed from the *future tenses of simple verbs* as pointing forward to an action still to be begun.

I shall now vary the order in which your grammar sets down the several tenses, and place them as they have relation to *actions* either compleat or incompleat, rather than to *times*, compleat or incompleat; as, I believe, it is owing principally to a mistaken application of these terms, that is, to the not rightly distinguishing between times and actions that so much confusion of explanation, and so many errors, concerning the powers of  
the



the tenses have arisen, both in Greek and Latin.

The present, the past, and the future time, may each of them, as hath been said, have respect to an action which is still carrying on, or to an action that is finished or compleated; and the perfectum, as it is called, in this view may be, and really is, as much a present tense, as that which is usually called so; for surely it implies the present time as fully when I say I have *now* dined; as when I say that I am *now* dining. Take λέγω and λέλεχα for examples; the former signifies that I am now speaking, the latter that I have now this instant done speaking; and, I trust, it will be evident that these two tenses are both expressive of the *present* time, and that they might, with strict propriety, have been called the presens tempus imperfectæ actionis, et presens tempus actionis perfectæ. Ἐλεγον and ἔλελεχεν the imperfectum, & plusquam perfectum,

fectum, are, in like manner, expressive of past time, the former of which signifies that I *was* speaking, and the latter that I *had done* speaking, and these tenses should have been called the præteritum tempus actionis nondum perfectæ, & præteritum tempus actionis perfectæ.

Λέξω and λεγῶ, the latter of which is circumflexed, to shew that the voice both rises and falls in uttering the double o, to distinguish it from λέγω, the present tense, are the first and second futures; the former of which signifies, I shall be speaking, and the latter, that I shall have done speaking at a time to come: the second future, it is true, is supposed, by some grammarians, to relate only to a more distant period than the former; and Sanctius is of this opinion, whilst others suppose it to be nothing more than the first future in the attic dialect; for my own part, I am fully persuaded that the first future corresponds with the future tense indicative,  
of

of the Latin grammar *legam*, and the second with the future tense subjunctive, (as it is there classed) namely *legero*, which, by the way, equally belongs to the indicative.

We are now come to the first and second aorists, and, agreeably to the analogy which holds in the present, the past, and the future tenses above mentioned, I conceive the first aorist to have had a reference in its original use, to an action incompleated, and the latter to an action fully compleated, whether at a present, a past, or a future period.

There is no difficulty as to the power of the paulo post futurum, which represents an action as immediately impending, though it sometimes signifies no more than the certainty of its consequence.

The subjoined Table will, perhaps, assist your memory, by bringing all the tenses into one view, with their connections and Powers.

Tempus

Tempus præsens, 2 Present Tenses. Tempus perfectum.	λεγω λελεχα	an action carrying on at the present time; <i>I am now speaking.</i> an action completed at the present time; <i>I have done speaking.</i>
Imperfectum, 2 Past Tenses. Plusquam perfectum	ελεγον ελελεχειν	an action carrying on at a past time; <i>I was speaking.</i> an action completed at a past time; <i>I had done speaking.</i>
Futurum primum, 2 Future Tenses. Futurum secundum	λεξω λεγω̃	an action going on at a future time; <i>I shall be speaking.</i> an action completed at a future time; <i>I shall have done speaking.</i>
Aoristus primum, 2 Indefinites. Aoristus secundus.	ελεξα ελεγον	an action going on at an indefinite time. an action completed at an indefinite time.
Paulo post futurum or the Instant future.	λελεξομαι	an action to be performed at a future time; which is soon to succeed. <i>I shall soon be spoken of.</i>

You must be heartily tired of this dry subject as well as myself; and I shall therefore only add a few short observations. In the first place, the present tense is sometimes put for the imperfectum, as *οτε ειδον οτι εκ ορθοποδουσι*, that they did not walk uprightly, for *ορθοποδεν*, Gal. xi. 14, &c. sometimes for the future, when either suddenness or certainty are intended, as *ερχομαι σοι ταχυ και κινησω*, I *will* come unto thee quickly and will remove, Rev. xi. 5. for *ελευσεται*, I *will* come.—The perfectum does not only signify that an action was compleated at the present time, but it implies, that it was done effectually and with energy. Helen pointing out Idomeneus to Priam from the walls of Troy, says, *Θεος ως εσηκ'*, he hath valiantly maintained his post, and stood up like a god to defend his Cretans; though, perhaps, it may here be used for the simple present time, he is standing like a god amongst the Cretans. Many



verbs require this tense to be so explained, as εοικα, *similis sum*; οίδα, *scio*; μεμνημαι, *recordor*. The Latins use *memini* & *novi* in the same manner; and this past completive tense is sometimes used for the future, to denote the certainty of the event. There is an example of this application in a fine passage of Hesiod's *Works and Days*, book the first, line 332. Jupiter is doubtless angry with such a one, and in the end hath rewarded him, i. e. will reward him according to his wickedness, χαλεπην επεδηκεν αμοιβην; yet this may be explained, *he hath certainly appointed* a severe retribution for his evil deeds.—The imperfectum which denotes an action carrying on at a past time, not only signifies the action to be incomplete, but sometimes implies deliberation or slowness; it is likewise used sometimes for the present, as ἔστος ἦν ὃν εἶπον in the first chapter of St. John, *this is* he of whom I spake.

I think



I think it hath been observed of the *plusquam perfectum*, which generally signifies an action compleated at a time passed long since, or at least when some time hath intervened, since its completion, that it is often used to imply the speedy exertion of a present action, as ἡ δ' ἔλυμπονδε βεβηκει, she flew up to Olympus with speed, and was gone in an instant. The Latins used the *præter pluperfect* tense in the same manner, as, *sic fata gradus evaserat altos*, *Æn.* 4, line 685, no sooner had she spoken than she had ascended the funeral pile,

*Ad hoc frementes verterant bis mille equos  
Galli canentes Cæsarem,*

That is, at the sight of the Ægyptian braided canopy, two thousand Gauls, (who had been conducted against the Parthians,) *precipitately* turned their horses with indignation, and revolting from Anthony, galloped shouting toward Cæsar,

that is, the instant they saw it, their horses were turned; *dixerat*, *Æn.* 11, line 152, has respect to the eagerness with which Priam asked several questions, as we say, in a breath.

*Quo molem hanc immanis equi? quis auctor  
habendus?*

*Quidve petunt? quæ relligio? aut quæ  
machina belli?*

*Dixerat;*

to which Sinon as instantly answers. I need not observe to you, after what has been said \*, that the future tenses have the force of the imperative, or of the intreating mode; they are also sometimes used to imply a habit or custom, as, *εφ' ὧν καθισουσιν οἱ Περσαι μαλακως*, upon which the Persians will sit, or accustom themselves to sit at their ease. In the following instance the imperative mode is used for the future tense, *si fætura gregem supple-*

\* Page 27.

verit aureus esto ; you shall have a statue of gold ; and in legislative sentences this is very common. So much has been said of the aorists, that I can scarcely recollect any thing to add, except an example of the first being used for the imperfectum. Then said the Jews, forty and six years hath this temple been in building, and wilt thou raise it up in three days, τεσσαρακοντα και εξ ελθουσιν ωκοδομηθη ο ναος ουλος, for it was not yet compleated: εμνησθησαν is used in the same chapter for the imperfectum, then remembered they ; and ειπεν for the plusquam perfectum, the word which he *had spoken* ; and in the ivth chapter, at the 49th verse, αποθανειν, the second aorist is used for the second future, Lord come down before my child *shall be dead*.—In English we very often hear the tenses used one for the other. I shall only give a single instance. When we call a servant, the usual answer is, I

come, Sir ; though he does not move a single step, and at the instant may be so employed it is not proper he should do it. But the present intimates the readiness of his intention, and he civilly, on that account, perhaps, prefers it to the future.—You will long since have perceived, that the French compound tenses and the Greeks aorists have a near affinity, with respect to past time, as, *j'ai bati un vaisseau*, I have built a vessel ; *j'ai vu le Roy aujourd'hui*, I have seen the King to day ; *j'ai vu le Roy cette année*, that is, at some indefinite time of this passing day, or of this passing year.—There are so many Greek verbs which are defective in some tense or other, whose defects are supplied from other verbs of similar meaning, though of different terminations \*, that the learner cannot always be assured

he

\* Clenard's Grammar, with Notes by Henry Stephens,

he is right, when he conjugates by analogy : and if we add to this difficulty, that of knowing all the provincial dialects, and poetic liberties, it seems to me, that in order to acquire a perfect critical acquaintance with the Greek language, a man must give up the best part of his life to the study of it, and be satisfied to be only a good Græcian ; you will know from what I have said in another place, that I do not mean to deter you from endeavouring to gain a competent degree of skill in it, which would deprive you of much pleasure, and several advantages : but you may be well assured, that only men of extraordinary parts are capable of attaining a compleat knowledge of it, without neglecting what is of more importance. I have ever been of opinion, that giving up ten or twelve years of human life to two dead languages, are *is* more than we can afford. In the number



of young gentlemen of fortune who are educated at our best public schools, scarce one of five hundred, perhaps, proves a very considerable classic scholar; and what with the neglect of real science, amongst these few, and that small attention which is paid to their religious principles, a great part of them turn out mere admirers of the classic writers only, whose beauties they may relish with a degree of taste. If they have a good imagination, and a flowing elocution at the same time, they become proficient in that species of eloquence, which, with all indifference to truth, like that of antient Rome, is equally applied to the support of justice or injustice at the bar, or of patriotism or faction in the senate; whilst the remaining youths of inferior parts and less proficiency, constitute the body of the great vulgar, who are formed, by their education, to be the dupes of it; in general,

they



they are slaves to the pursuit of mere amusement, and their highest literary glory is to show their taste by the repetition of antient poetry, or, haply, by composing lines of their own in imitation of verses, as Pliny says of old, *Caninius majore curâ quam ingenio.*

I am, &c.

L E T T E R

## L E T T E R VI.

I Told you, my dear C, that I would give you some short explanation of the nature and use of the middle voice; the account, I suspect, will be very short indeed, for I have not been fortunate enough to meet with any express dissertation upon it; and must endeavour, therefore, to make up for the defect of a compleat explanation, in the clearness of what little I have to say. To begin with the *name*, which seeming to imply that it holds a middle place, between an active and a passive verb, it hath occasioned some mistakes; for as this voice is truly *both active and passive*, it should rather, in my opinion, have been termed vox duplex, than

than vox media, upon that account. The primary use of this middle voice, as it is called, most undoubtedly was to express reciprocity ; that is, like some of the French verbs to reflect the action, which is signified by the verb, back upon the agent, which thus becomes both the subject and the object of it: for the middle verb is active in expressing an exertion of the energy, and passive in signifying the reception of its effect; thus *πειθειν* active, signifies to persuade; *πειθεσθαι* passive, to be persuaded; and *πειθεσθαι* in the middle voice, to persuade one's self; *αρεσκειν* active, to please; *αρεσκεσθαι* passive, to be pleased; *αρεσκεσθαι* in the middle voice, to please one's self. You will recollect, that the present and the imperfect tenses of the middle voice, are precisely the same words with the present and imperfect tenses passive, and they have, accordingly, sometimes an active and sometimes a passive

a passive signification, for which there is no certain determinate rule to be given; but the two futures, which are *different* words from the *active* and *passive* futures, as likewise the perfect and pluperfect tenses, which differ from the perfects and pluperfects in the active and passive voices, as both the aorists also, which differ from the active and passive aorists, are generally to be understood actively, though not always; and it is to be remembered, that the second aorist and second future, do not occur so frequently in an *active* sense, as the first aorist and the first future.

In the primary use of the middle voice, as hath been said, it is properly a reciprocal only; but it hath other powers belonging to it. Our Saviour, in the second chapter of St. Mark, at the eleventh verse, speaking to the paralytic, uses the first aorist imperative, of the middle voice, *εγειραι και ἄρον τον κραββατον σου*, to intimate

timate that he was now impowered to  
 raise himself by his own strength; ζήσου-  
 ται, the first future middle in the fifth  
 chapter of St. John, at the twenty-fifth  
 verse, may imply that they shall live again  
 in their own persons, in *opposition* to the  
 doctrine that men were to live again in  
 their offspring only, or by transmigration,  
 an opinion which appears from the ele-  
 venth chapter of St. John to have obtained  
 credit amongst the Jews, and is one of  
 those eastern absurdities that is contro-  
 verted in the book of Job, I know, says  
 the *heroe* of that sublime poem, (if I may  
 use such an expression) that my Redeemer  
 liveth, that he will stand at the latter day  
 upon the earth, and though after my skin,  
 worms destroy this body, yet in my *flesh*  
 that I shall see God, *whom I shall see for*  
*myself*, and *mine* eyes shall behold, and  
 not *another's*. Αφίστανται, understood in  
 the present middle at Luke viii. ver. 13th.  
 signifies

signifies *sponte suâ decedunt*, they apostatize from not *endeavouring* to establish their faith, or from an *indulged* weakness and indolence of mind; that is, seeing they *will* not see, and hearing they *will* not hear. Τίς αψαμενος ηψατο, Luke viii. 45th and 46th verses, in the first aorist middle, may mean *ultrò tangens consulto tetigit*, who touching me did it by design; for there is always some consideration of self, whether the verb be a precise reciprocal or not, that is, whether the agent be regularly the object upon which the action falls or not.

Your course of study will afford you abundant examples. Ανακεφαλαιωσασθαι, which is the first aorist infinitive of the middle voice, in the first chapter of the first Epistle to the Ephesians, at the tenth verse, means to unite *unto himself* all things through Jesus Christ, and not simply to gather together, but to restore again to  
that



that union with the source of blessedness which man possessed before the fall.

Αναλογισασθε, the Imperative first aorist middle, Heb. xii. ver. 3, means, *think earnestly, and reason with yourselves who that person was, &c.*

Παρεβιασαντο, the first aorist middle in the twenty-fourth chapter and twenty-ninth verse of St. Luke, means, they pressed him in the most affectionate manner for the satisfaction he had given them.

Παρεγενοντο, the second aorist middle, in the second chapter of St. Matthew, verse the first, means, that the magi came with eagerness and zeal, moved to it with an almost irresistible impulse; the same explanation gives a force to the account of St. John's entrance upon his ministry, in the first verse of the third chapter of St. Matthew, which we translate coldly, in those days *came* John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea, &c. and

I am

I am persuaded, there is not a single passage, to be found where the middle voice is used but the sense of it is heightened by its application, although, perhaps, there may not be a strict reciprocal sense to be distinguished.

You will do well to set down all such places as they occur to you, in which you feel the propriety of these remarks, and you may alter your opinion afterwards, if you should see reasons for so doing, which will not improbably be the case; for I have never read, as I said, any express treatise upon the powers of the middle voice; what I have advanced of its reciprocal nature having been taken from a note of Dr. Clark's, in his edition of Homer, and confirmed by Mr. Harris's *Hermes*; nor did I consider it with much attention, till I had occasion to do it upon your account; and, in truth, if you are not wholly indebted to the same learned

ed

ed writers, for what I have said of the tenses, you are so for the confirmation of my opinion about them. Should you find any thing absolutely new, it is more than I can be certain of; I write to you from principles which have been long fixed in my own mind, without referring back to the authors who established them. In the case of the middle voice, whenever reciprocity was not signified in the plain obvious meaning of this term, and the antients made use of it notwithstanding, rather than of the active or passive, there must have been some such meaning intended as I have supposed, unless you think with your brother, who is very angry upon the occasion, that it was done only to puzzle poor boys, and teach them patience in the school of grammar and affliction.

I am, &c.

## LETTER VII.

DEAR SIR,

I Have read your Letter to my friend C, concerning the use of the middle voice, as you desired; and as, upon this occasion, I have looked over Kuster's Essay, which was strongly recommended to me, I think some observations may be added to those you have made, particularly upon such verbs as do not occur in the active voice, which your remarks did not seem to reach. In casting my eye over the Greek primitives, I find that the greater number of those verbs, which have no active voice, have evidently a reflexive sense, and from this I feel additional conviction, that a reflexive sense is the universal

verbal characteristic of *all* middle verbs, and that there is no occasion to make any other division or distinction amongst them, than what arises from the different degrees in which they severally possess it. In the inclosed, I have first very shortly stated the substance of your account as nearly as I can recollect it; I then give you my own; and have finished what I had to say with a few observations which appear to be connected with the subject. All this I have done principally with a view to the arranging and digesting my own thoughts upon it, in order to settle my whole opinion; you will find little that is worth your attention, and I send it with a request that you will tell me whether I have understood you, and if I am right in my own conjectures.

I am, dear SIR,

Your affectionate friend,

R. F.



REMARKS ON THE USE OF THE  
MIDDLE VERBS.

BESIDES the active and passive voices, which are found in verbs of all languages, the Greeks have another called the middle voice; it is so named, because it has a middle nature between the other two voices, partaking somewhat of each, the agent of such middle verbs being active in impressing the energy, and passive in the reception of it: thus

*τυπῶ*, active, signifies, I beat.

*τυπῶμαι*, passive, I am beaten.

*τυπῶμαι*, middle, I beat myself. There is no occasion for a number of instances; to have pointed out the principle is sufficient; and by a proper attention in the course of reading Greek, examples of middle verbs may be found in almost every page.

But it is to be observed, that all middle verbs have not this reflexive sense in equal force;

force ; some of them are truly and strictly reciprocals, the energy of the verb falling *directly* upon the agent ; there are others which reflect the energy *obliquely*, upon the agent, and that with various degrees of obliquity ; and others, again, which recede farther still from strict reciprocity, and seem to mark only a *stronger* energy, than would be expressed by the verb active, though they still retain the character of a reflexive sense, by their attachment to the agent, and by not suffering the energy to quit it entirely. This is what I take to be the substance of your account.

In the following passages I think there is a scale or gradation of middle sense from strict reciprocity, downwards to stronger energy only.

1. πολεσιν επιμιζομαι ἀνδρων. Callim.

Hymn to Dian.

*I will intermix myself.*

2. πεπλῆς ποικίλης ἡμπεσχετο. Eurip.  
Medea. 1162.

*She threw around herself.*

3. ὥπερ τῶς Θυννῶς σκοπιαζεται Ὀλπις ὁ  
γριπευς. Theocr. I. vii.

*He looks him out the Thunnies, or looks  
them out for himself.*

4. Νυν δ' Ολυμπία στεφανώσαμενος. Pind.  
Olymp. 12.

*Having procured himself to be crowned.*

5. τεμεγασθενης,  
ἐρασσατο γαιαοχος Ποσειδων.

Pind. Olymp. 1.

*He loved much.*

In these passages the middle sense of the verbs seems to be gradually shaded off, as it were, from ἐπιμιζομαι, a perfect reciprocal, down to ἐρασσατο; the meaning of which, might have been expressed by the active aorist ἐρασσε, but not so emphatically, for ἐρασσε would have only signified

signified *he loved*, whereas *ερασσατο* signifies that *he loved with ardour*, or (still to preserve a shadow of reciprocity) *he loved for himself or for his own sake*.

There are many verbs both primitive and derivative, which are never found with the active terminations, but have only the middle and passive voices; these do not seem to be comprehended in what has been said above of middle verbs which are regularly formed: but upon farther consideration, I have no doubt, but such would all be found as truly middle verbs as the other.

It is to be observed, that in verbs which have three voices, the sense of the middle voice depends upon that of the active; and as sometimes the middle bears only an allusive or figurative relation to the active, it is difficult to pronounce a verb truly middle in such circumstances, without recurring to the precise signification  
of

of the active voice. To explain what I mean, I shall take the instance of *κοπτω* and *κοπτομαι*, the former of which signifies I *beat*, and the latter I beat myself, or I *lament*. Now if *κοπτω* were lost, it would be impossible to tell that *κοπτομαι* was a truly middle verb—apply what I have here said to the verbs whose actives are *really* lost; it is but reasonable to conclude, that if these actives could be recovered, so as to obtain the true genuine meaning of them, their middle voices would appear to be *truly* middle. Nor is it at all wonderful that so many active verbs *should* be lost; the Greek, like all other languages, we must suppose was improved from some rude archetype; to expect perfect and distinct remains of *this* in the productions of the refined and elegant ages of Greece, would be as absurd as to search, with the expectation of finding *pure Saxon*, in the language of Pope and



and Addifon. The obfolete dialect is in either cafe intimately blended, and interwoven with the polished language. A knowledge of this, as a feparate dialect, moft probably remained at the time when the beft Greek claffic authors wrote, as that of the Saxon does now amongft us, and therefore the learned amongft them underftood the full force of thefe verbs, by being within reach of their origin, although the modern readers of their works, fhould not be able fully to comprehend it, at the diftance of fo many centuries. This general obfervation may ferve to account for the want of a ftriking middle fenfe in fome verbs of this clafs, but there is much lefs frequent occafion to recur to it, than might fairly be imagined.

The greater part of the primitives of this kind, [which I have reafon to think do not amount to many more than fixty],  
are

are in their own nature and import clearly reflexive, without any consideration of the active voice they may once have had. The *primitives* being thus accounted for, their respective compounds follow of course; and I have not the least doubt but all derivative verbs of this nature, might be very easily reduced to the same principle, by carefully considering their force and meaning whenever they occur.

I shall set down several of the primitives I have mentioned in their three gradations or orders; in the first place, as they are direct reciprocals; 2dly, as they are oblique reciprocals; and thirdly, as they are verbs only of stronger energy.

Of the first kind are αρνεομαι, αλαομαι, βριμσομαι, εξομαι, εμπαζομαι, δυναμαι, ημαι, καυχασομαι, κινυρομαι, μεμφομαι, μναομαι, μυδαζομαι, οδυρομαι, οιχομαι, ολοφυρομαι, φεβομαι, φαιδομαι, &c.

In the first chapter of St. John, at the twentieth verse, we read, *ὁμολογησὴ καὶ οὐ ἡρνήσατο*, which we translate, *he confessed and denied not*—but it would have been more properly rendered, *he did not deny himself*, that is, he did not disown who he was. Instances of all the rest in each class might be cited, but it would be tedious and troublesome to search for them, I shall therefore take the more compendious method of pointing out their reciprocal nature, by shewing that the very same ideas are expressed by reciprocals in French.

*αλαομαι* - - *s'egarer.*

*βριμοομαι* - - *s'emporter.*

*ἔζομαι* - - *s'affeoir.*

*ἐμπαζομαι* - - *se foucier.*

*δυναται* - - *il se peut.*

*ἤμαι* - - - *s'affeoir.*

*καυχιομαι* - *se vanter.*

*κινυρομαι*

κινυρομαι	- -	se lamenter.
μερφομαι	- -	se plaindre.
μναομαι	- -	se souvenir.
μυδαζομαι	- -	se revolter.
οδυρομαι	- -	se lamenter.
οιχομαι	- -	s'en aller.
ολοφυρομαι	-	s'affliger.
φεβομαι	- -	s'enfuir.
φειδομαι	- -	se passer de.

As the French reciprocals very nearly resemble the middle verbs of the Greeks, I have paralleled them in that language, but examples corresponding to some of them, are to be found both in Latin and English. *Καυχασμαι*, *jacto me ipsum*, I boast myself; *συναγειρομαι*, I collect myself. Theocrit. Idyl. 15.

To this class may not improperly be referred *μαρναμαι* and *μαχομαι*, which evidently have a reciprocal sense, for whoever fights must have some person to fight

against

against him. They are answered in French by *se battre*: *ἀσπαζομαι* may likewise be added. In the tenth book of the *Iliad*, line 541, we find — τοῖδε χαρέντες — δεξιῇ τ' ἡσπάζοντο— and, doubtless, a great many more might be added, if we could come at their actives; to give one instance, it is probable that *ἄλλω*, the lost active of *ἄλλομαι*, to leap, signified to cast or throw, and this gives great spirit and propriety to Homer's *ἄλτο χαμαζε*.

Of the second kind are *αἰνῦμαι*, *αρτεομαι*, *αρνυμαι*, *χολεμαι*, *βελομαι*, *γλιχομαι*, *ελδομαι*, *δεχομαι*, *ευχομαι*, *κταομαι*, *λαζομαι*, *λιλαιομαι*, *λισσομαι*, *μυνομαι*, *πενομαι*, *πριαμαι*, *ῶνεομαι*, for to whom does a man take, procure, &c. but *to himself*. Thus one of the goffips in the 15th Idyl of Theocritus, *ἀλλ' ἴθι τωμίπεχονον καὶ τὰν περονατριδὰ λαζευ*—*fibulatum peplum tibi subnecte*.



In the third class I place αἰσθανομαι, ἀκροαομαι, μασαομαι, ὀπτομαι, ὁσφραϊνομαι, πυνθανομαι, φθεγγομαι, &c. for these verbs and others of the same nature, seem to have a stronger, more necessary, and inseparable attachment to their agent than others, as if one said I myself *feel, hear, &c.* (actions which no one else can possibly do for me) and thus to partake remotely of a reciprocal sense, for which reason they have been always used as middle verbs, to the total exclusion of their less significant actives. By way of confirmation, it may be observed, that there are French reciprocals of the same kind, such are s'appercevoir, s'ecrier, s'avancer de; and upon the same principle, perhaps, we may account for such verbs as βληχαομαι, ἵπταμαι, μηχάομαι, ογκάομαι, πέτομαι. This form might also be extended to several *derivative* verbs of the same nature, δερκομαι, ἀπλομαι, γευομαι, &c.

Most

Most of the *primitive* middle verbs may, I think, be thus fairly accounted for, and many, if not all the rest might be reduced to the same principle, by a more accurate investigation of them as they occur in authors: and if not, we must recur to the impossibility of coming at their actives. This observation of the middle sense depending upon the active is made by Kuster, though he does not seem to have carried it so far, and to have applied it as he obviously might have done; for in his third section he throws together many verbs “*formam quidem, sed non vim mediam habentia*,” as he expresses it: whereas had he adhered to his own remark, he must have concluded, that all middle verbs whatever were truly middle if all things necessary to be considered could come under consideration.

It is not, indeed, to be pretended that instances do not occur, where the middle  
form

form does not seem to convey in any perceptible degree the middle sense. It would be wonderful indeed if amongst so many authors, not a single writer should ever have misapplied one of these verbs, through inattention, affectation, erroneous custom, or some other cause ; but I firmly believe, that not one single verb can be mentioned which is so *uniformly misapplied* as not, in some instances, to show its *middle* sense, and contradict the assertion of its having the form only without the force of a middle verb.

Upon this one easy and rational principle then all middle verbs are reducible to the same character, and the knowledge of them is rendered more easy and simple by their being considered as differing from each other only in *degree*, and not at all in *kind*.

I shall add a few other observations, connected with the subject, before I quit it.

There

There seem to be two ways of using a middle verb differently from its strict and characteristic meaning, and both arising from its *middle* nature, viz.

First, By giving it a signification almost entirely *active*; and,

Secondly, By giving it a signification almost or entirely *passive*.

In the next place it is to be remarked, that the middle verbs in termination, are not the only *reciprocals* in the Greek language, for there are many likewise of an active form, which in the same manner have a signification that is strictly reciprocal; of this kind are *καμπτω*, *κλινω*, *κυπτω*, *ριπτω*, *σρεφω*, *τρεπω*, with their compounds when placed without an expressed object. It is a part of the delicate character of the *ανηρ βδελυρος* of Theophrastus *ὅταν σιωπήσῃ το θεατρον ανακνύσας ερευνειν*. In the theogony of Hesiod we read *Ἄλλ ὅτε δὴ ῥ' ενιαυτος ἔην περι δε ετρα-*

πον ὥραι; and in the Acts of the Apostles, ἐσρέψεν ὁ Θεός, se convertit.

It is likewise worthy of observation, that the Greek reciprocals, whether of an active or middle form, exactly tally with the French in the near affinity they bear in some usages to verbs passive. Thus in French they say vous vous trompez, you are mistaken; il se desoit hier, it was said yesterday. And in Greek we find,

Δισσοιν σέρηση τη δ' εν ἡμερα τεκνοῖν.

Eurip. Phæniss.

Εμοι καμψει παν γονυ. Rom. xiv. ii.

The verb μεταβαλλω frequently occurs in the passive sense of mutor; in French it would be rendered se changer, to suffer a change. And, on the contrary, the passive form is sometimes used to express this sort of reciprocity as in the eighth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. Φιλιππος ευρεθη εις Αζωτον; in French, Philippe se trouva.



## L E T T E R VIII.

MY DEAR C.

I AM much obliged to Mr. F. for his remarks upon my Letter to you, concerning the middle verbs, which appear to be as just as they are ingenious; but what renders them particularly entertaining to me in the perusal, is, that they have recalled several passages of my boyish years to remembrance, which I look back upon with pleasure; and my way of thinking, likewise, almost in my childhood. Some of these circumstances I mentioned when we passed an evening with the vicar of the place where I had the first draughts of the accidence, five or six and fifty years ago, and bitter draughts I thought they were. I perfectly recollect, that

when I first read of a neuter verb ending in *o*, yet could not take *r* to *make him a passive*, I set myself to consider the reason of it, and it appeared a very strange affair, whilst at the same time a verb deponent was allowed the privilege of a passive ending, only to make a show with ; the example of *osculator te & osculator a te*, was a source of pleasantry amongst us when applied to the rod or the cufface, and passed without any scruples respecting the propriety of its latinity ; but the other affair seemed to be so flagrant an act of partiality and injustice in the master to countenance, [for I supposed it to be all his doing, *who certainly made the accident*] that the head boys ought to guard against him, upon this account, at the next *bar-ring out*. I spoke, as I conceived, very properly upon the necessity of so doing, but my feeble voice was not heard ; our tyrant, indeed, was excluded, and a writ of magna charta demanded at the usual season

season of the year, though the day was always kept a profound secret ; but all I recollect to have been settled after the bustle was over, were the hours of coming in and going out of school, with the claim of an exemption from tasks upon holydays, and that the laws were signed in great form by the master, whose name was Hazelhurst, and two of the trustees of the school, after which we dined together in triumph at the master's table, as the barons did with king John. The first book I laid hold upon, to explain this license of deponent verbs after I grew a great boy, and entertained other thoughts of the matter than my childish reveries, was the Oxford Grammar, which did not altogether satisfy me. The next which I seized with eagerness, was Johnson's Grammatical Commentaries, with which I was exceedingly delighted, though it led me into a wilderness of doubts about this, and a thousand things besides ; inasmuch that I

determined to lay aside all farther thoughts concerning such abstruse subjects, till I could get somebody to assist me, and should be better able to judge of them; but not meeting with any person I chose to consult for a long time, I made up matters as well as I could in my own mind, and plodded on as other boys did; only proposing now and then a difficulty with a conjecture annexed, which oftener brought me into disgrace than did me any honour. As Mr. F. seems to be surprized that the learned Kufter did not carry his observations upon the middle verbs, so far as to discern that no other distinction should be made between them, than what arises from their possessing the reciprocal sense in different degrees, and that there are no verbs in the Greek language which are mere deponents with the *form* only of middle verbs, without their *signification*, for they have all a reference to self in some way or other; so I cannot help wondering, it

hath

hath not struck our learned and ingenious friend, that what are called deponent verbs in Latin, have, in reality, so near a relation to middle verbs in Greek, as to render it probable that many, if not most of them, may be properly considered as middle verbs, with a reciprocal sense, after the same manner that the Greek verbs have it, whose actives are either obsolete or entirely lost. I shall set down a few of these Latin *deponents*, as they are called, in the same manner Mr. F. has done the Greek middle verbs, in classes; to which I shall add the corresponding middle verbs in Greek, and I am persuaded that together, with the coincidence of their passive terminations, they will appear to be no less justly distributed into such as are either *direct reciprocals*, or *oblique reciprocals*, or *verbs of stronger energy with reference to self*, than the Greek middle verbs their fellows on the other side of the Ionian. Many of the Greek verbs have



entirely lost their active terminations, and this is the case of the Roman verbs of the same order; but a sufficient number of these still remain, to render it probable, that most of the deponent verbs were originally possessed of active endings, though not *all* of them, for which a very clear reason might be assigned. That they were originally formed upon the model of the Greek middle verbs, on account of their reciprocal sense, I have not the least doubt in my own mind, though I have no inclination to debate the matter with those who think otherwise; to me the affair is indubitable, and I look for no other certainty, in matters of so little importance.

I am, my Charles, &c.

*P. S.* It would not have been, at all difficult to have enlarged the list I have given in the next page; but, as hints, these instances are sufficient, and I would  
always

always have you set down in a common place book any other examples as they occur, I mean, if you think it worth your while.

<i>Direct Reciprocals.</i>		<i>Oblique Retiprocals.</i>	
adipiscor -	προσέχωμαι	revertor -	κατέρχομαι
lamentor -	οδύρομαι	ludificor -	παρακρίνομαι
misereor -	ολοφύρομαι	odoror -	οσφραίνομαι
mereor -	μισθοδοτέομαι	altercor -	ανταποκρίνομαι
utor -	χράομαι	percontor	πυνθάνομαι
reminiscor	αναμνησκόμαι	speculor -	σκέπτομαι
fruor -	καπτόομαι	revereor -	εμπάζομαι
lucror -	κρημνίζομαι	testor -	μαρτύρομαι
glorior -	κωχάομαι	vescor -	σίτεομαι
meditor -	λογίζομαι	fortior -	μείρομαι
aversor -	αποσπρέφομαι	pacifcor -	περιδίδομαι
verecundor	αισχύνομαι	vaticinor -	μαντεύομαι
confiteor -	ἐξομολογέομαι	auguror -	οἰωνίζομαι
innitor -	σκηπτοίμαι	miseror -	οικτιρίζομαι
		aggredior	προσερχομαι
		sciscitor -	πυνθάνομαι

*Verbs*

*Verbs of stronger energy.*

malignor	- - -	πονηρέυομαι
operor	- - -	εργάζομαι
amplexor	- - -	αγκαλίζομαι
stomachor	- - -	χολῶμαι
strenue inficior	-	ἀρνέομαι
gravor	- - -	ἄχθομαι

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List of Deponents with a passive signification,  
most of which have likewise an active  
termination remaining.

<i>Actives.</i>		<i>Deponents.</i>		<i>Passives.</i>
adjuto	- -	adjutor	- -	adjutor.
		adipiscor	- -	adipiscor.
aspernans	-	aspernor	- -	aspernor.
comito	- -	comitor	- -	comitor.
crimino	- -	criminior	- -	criminor.
glorians *	-	glorior	- -	gloriandus.

\* Whenever the active or the passive participle is found to have been generally used, I have no doubt of the active or passive form of the verb's having originally existed entire:—the active and the passive form mutually imply each other, and a middle form implies the existence of both, by a natural Principle; but Fashion is the sole arbiter in cases of this sort, to whose determination we must appeal.

*Actives*

<i>Actives.</i>	<i>Deponents.</i>	<i>Passives.</i>
polliceo -	polliceor -	polliceor.
digno - -	dignor - -	dignor.
dominans -	dominor -	dominor.
expergifco	expergifcor	experrecti.
experio - -	experior -	experiendus.
innitens -	innitor - -	
- - - -	fateor - -	fateor.
- - - -	hortor - -	hortor.
- - - -	ftipulor -	ftipulor.
tueo - -	tueor - -	tueor.
- - - -	feñtor - -	feñtor.
- - - -	potior - -	potior.

## L E T T E R IX.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

I AM well pleased with your inclination to know somewhat more of music, and do not consider your questions as idle and impertinent. You have heard enough about it already; to know that in every octave, or scale of eight notes, there are always two, which are distinguished by the name of hemitones; and that the places, which these half notes occupy, is not a mere matter of caprice, but established by the Author of Nature; as is likewise the degree of acuteness with which one note rises above that which is immediately below it, throughout the whole system; were it otherwise, if the notes  
in



in music were not confined to *certain* intervals, it would be impossible for it to exist as a science, for the same reason that History and Painting could not exist without a natural Language of action, there might not only be as many different kinds of music, as there are different nations, but as there are individuals in the world, and the powers of each, must be limited to every man's *own mind*, there could be no singing or playing to another person. Nothing is so absurd but hath its propagators and defenders; many of the ancients were of opinion, we learned our music from the birds, in which they have been followed by some modern writers; but to whom it may be asked, were the birds indebted for their skill, *their* principles of music most undoubtedly come with them into the world, and certainly so must *ours* likewise; or all men, (I mean all men who have an ear), would not agree  
in

in regulating their voices by the same rules ; and yet this is the case, in a great measure, with persons in all parts of the globe, who have no more communication than the linnets, and thrushes, and larks, of different countries, have with each other, who yet whistle after a similar manner ; or, as I might say, whose notes agree in the sameness of their intervals. The laws, indeed, by which their melody is regulated, have not been enquired into with any great accuracy ; and, perhaps, they would elude our search ; but thus much is certain, that they are different from those which govern our own ; and that these feathered songsters have no idea of harmony, nor appear to have any delight in it. Birds, indeed, when under our confinement, may be taught to sing in tune, that is, agreeably to our intervals of music, but this is an imitation of sounds, they would not listen

to

to if they were at liberty, at least not sufficiently to acquire them, as they do their *nest-song* ; were a lark to live in a state of nature, for a century, it would not be tempted to vary its original notes, or learn a strain of the ploughman, whistled he ever so blithly ; and if one of these birds which hath been taught *our* music, doth not hear the tune which it hath learned, for some months, it will return to its native intervals of song, and whistle like all others of the same species, with some very inconsiderable variations, and those probably for the worse.

It seems highly probable to me, therefore, that every different species of birds, is limited to a distinct species of melody which arrives at its full perfection, with the perfection of its bodily organs, and is capable of no farther improvement ; and as beyond this they appear to have little delight in each other's singing, so long as they are in a state of freedom, it operates jointly

jointly with their figure, and the colours of their plumage, to confine their pleasures and affection to their own tribes, and thus contributes primarily to preserve the several species distinct; accordingly, it is observed of the music of most birds, (and perhaps the silence of some fine voices and sweet toned harpsichords, may be accounted for upon the same principle) that as soon as the first great end of providence is answered, their music is at an end. Melody and rythmus, in the opinion of Aristotle, as they respect the human species, are congenial to the soul, ἡ δὲ μουσικὴ φύσει τῶν ἡδυσμένων ἐστὶ, καὶ τις εἰσὶ συγγενεία ταῖς ἀρμονίαις, καὶ τοῖς ρυθμοῖς εἶναι. Music, like the other sciences, hath its foundation in Nature, its principles are the gift of God implanted in our constitution, we neither learned it from the birds, nor from the chiming of hammers, those principles indeed which were born with us are capable of being improved,

or of being neglected, but all men are fingers in the same manner as all men speak, and rejoice, and laugh, and lament; at least I never heard of any person but at some time, or upon some occasion or other, hath attempted to harmonize his utterance; but no man is so utterly untuneable as to have an aversion to all musical inflexions of the *human voice*, whatever he may have for those of instrumental melody \*. We were doubtless formed to solace ourselves under labour, by an attention to musical cadences, and the harmony of sounds, and almost every artificer makes use of them to be-

\* If it should still be said that there *are* persons who are born with an absolute *aversion* to musical notes of every sort, they are to be considered as deviating from the species, and in the opinion of Sir William Temple, would act right to keep their own council; for wherever we discover this imperfection, we may generally expect to meet a gloomy disposition of mind, with a corresponding moroseness of behaviour, and common prudence bids us stand aloof.



guile the time, and to soften the severity  
of his toils,

Hinc altâ de rupe canit frondator ad auras—  
Et longum interea cantu solata laborem,  
Arguto conjux percurrit pectine telas.

Hence from the mountains overhanging brow,  
The woodman whistles to the echoing air,  
Whilst with her family the plodding wife  
Sings as she plies the wool.

I am, my dear C.

Your's, &c.

## L E T T E R X.

SO far from being offended, my dear Charles, I am pleased with the candour of your remark ; it does you honour ; prudence most undoubtedly instructs us to avoid a *strict connection* with a person who has an aversion to music, but as he must be no less unhappy in himself than he is a burthen to others, his condition is truly pitiable, and he no more deserves to be the object of contempt and scorn upon this account, than he would for having been born a cripple.

A *defective* judgement in music, is, indeed, consistent with the *gentlest* manners; it may arise from a neglect of culture, or from an accidental disorder in the organs of hearing *only*; but in the case of an utter

aversion it is to be suspected there is somewhat amiss, not only in the formation of the *ear* to produce this effect, but in the general system of the nerves, which are either too rigid to be sensible of *any* delicate impressions, or as in a false stringed instrument so unhappily proportioned, that nothing but jarring and discords can arise from the vibration of their parts; and I scarcely ever knew a person who professed an absolute dislike of music in general, in whom as general a dullness and insensibility to all the works of elegance likewise, was not very distinguishable, attended with a splenetic malignity of temper, and a relish only for coarse, fordid, or brutal indulgencies. A good Taste, whether it respects the objects of the eye or the ear, hath a connection with what has been termed the *moral sense*, by which antecedent to any reasonings or reflections, we some how *feel* and admire

the

the beauty of a just and virtuous action ; and it is not wonderful to find those who unhappily want it, no less blind and dull to the charms of virtue in the moral world, than they are to those of beauty, and order, and harmony, in the natural ; whereas the man who is formed so as to be affected with what is beautiful in art or nature, is susceptible of every tender impression, in the language of the scriptures, he rejoices with those that do rejoice, and weeps with those that weep ; in short, every joy and every sorrow becomes, by sympathy, his own, and he converts even the miseries of others into a heartfelt pleasure, which has elegantly been styled the Luxury of Grief.

I am, &c.

## L E T T E R   X I.

MY DEAR C.

**D**OCTOR KEIL, in his anatomy, if I am not mistaken, hath asserted, that a good voice is capable of dividing a musical note into a hundred and ninety six parts, and that a good ear can distinguish this very minute difference of tune. If we suppose a musical string stretched by a weight, to give any certain note, whether the weight be afterward either increased or diminished, so as to cause the difference of tune here mentioned, I am inclined to believe that a very accurate ear would immediately perceive it, and that a perfect voice might, perhaps, in each case, found in exact unison with it, though



though I can scarcely imagine it could precisely pass from one sound to the other at pleasure, and that repeatedly. The divisions of the Glottis at the upper end of the Trachæa, are, upon this supposition, almost inconceivable; its greatest aperture is no wider than the tenth of an inch; now if a very good voice can run up two octaves, that is fifteen notes, and divide each note into *ten* parts only, and a different degree of its aperture is required for each of these ten parts, (or commas, as they are called,) the diameter of it must be a hundred and fifty times less in sounding the highest comma, than its diameter is, when it sounds the deepest; and as the sides of the glottis move through equal spaces, at every variation of the aperture, we are thus capable of dividing the tenth part of an inch with great exactness into three hundred equal parts, and that with a most astonishing rapidity, by a simple

act of the Will ; but wonderful as this is, there must be as delicate a management of the breath employed, to produce the different shades of these sounds, (if I may so call them) which is very possible to be done by changing their *tone* without any variation of *tune* ; the same person being capable whilst he holds the aperture of the glottis at the same width, of giving different degrees of strength or softness to his voice ; and a good singer can swell the same note till it rushes upon the ear, with all the force of musical violence, or melt it down by an imperceptible gradation of dying cadence, till the ear can pursue it no farther, and it mixes as it were with silence. In concert this hath a fine effect, it resembles the coming on of darkness in a total solar eclipse, when Nature seems astonished, and pauses, as it were, preparatory to her dissolution ; and if after an awful rest, whilst the mind is all attention

and

and expectance, the music breaks out at once with the majesty of a full chorus, and in grand solemn movements, whilst the notes of some instruments are continued and swelled above the others (for which the hautboy is particularly adapted) such a contrast must give the highest degree of extasy, a single passage in music is capable of inspiring, and which if the nerves have been duly prepared by the foregoing parts of a composition, is probably as great as some delicate frames are able to support without injury, and the effect might possibly be continued, till it ended either in madness, or the destruction of the Constitution; just as in some mechanic engines, too violent a motion must either set fire to the machine, or break it in pieces. The utmost limit of perfection, is but one single point removed from evil, as the finest imagination is allied to frenzy: thus the highest  
cordials

cordials may be taken till they lower the spirits instead of raising them, and the noblest medicines be exalted, till after a certain degree of salutary efficacy, they become poisons.

I am,

My dear C, &c.

LETTER

## LETTER XII,

DEAR CHARLES,

**I**T is scarcely possible to enter upon the subject of accents, as you desire, without being drawn on much farther than I could wish, and to enlarge upon emphasis and quantity, which are the other connected adjuncts of syllabic sounds. It would be wasting your time and my own to little purpose, to point out the many mistakes of learned men who have confounded these things together; even Mr. Foster, of Eton, who has lately published a treatise upon accent and quantity, with more good sense and clearness, as well as more learning, than almost any other writer before him, and who seemed to be  
entirely



entirely master of his subject; *this* very learned and accurate scholar I say, appears, notwithstanding, in some passages of his book to have confounded emphasis with accent, and to have pulled down in one place, what he hath built up in another.

Every syllabic sound must be pronounced in some certain pitch of tune; with a certain degree of force, and continued for a longer or a shorter space of time; these are the plain principles of accent, emphasis, and quantity, in their natural order; for we must first pitch the *tune*, and ascertain the *tone*, before we can dwell upon any sound, to give it length. In the utterance of a word which has two or more syllables, we very rarely pronounce them at the same precise pitch of voice, or give an equal *time* to each of them, or produce them with the same degree of strength and force in utterance, for in truth it would be exceedingly *difficult*.

*ficult* to do it by *design*. *That* syllable of a word which is pronounced with a *higher* elevation of the voice, is said to be the acuted or sharpened syllable; *that* which is pronounced at a *lower* pitch, is said to be a graver syllable; and *that* upon which the voice is forced is the *emphatic* syllable; besides which, a syllable is either long or short, as the sound of it is continued a longer or a shorter time with relation to others: nothing will illustrate this, so well as a musical instrument; if you take a violin, and strike the notes C and D, the first note is the graver, and the second the acuter, to which the tone rises; but if you strike D first, and then C, the second note is the graver and the former the acuter, from which the tone falls to C, if you hold one note the time of a *minim*, and the other only the time of a *crotchet*, they bear the same relative proportion that a long and a short syllable do

do to each other, according to the common rule of *prosody*; and if you press your bow upon the string with greater force in sounding one of these notes, though without changing its time, whether the minim or the crotchet, the force applied to that note will give an idea of emphasis in speaking; but at present I am only concerned with accent, by which is meant simply the rise and fall of the voice in utterance, and have nothing to do with emphasis or with quantity in this place, which are reserved for another Letter, should I write any more about them.

Every word is said to have one (and only one) of its syllables sounded in a *higher* tone than the rest; this is the case without exception; and confining the rise of the voice to one syllable of a word, gives each word a separation and distinction from the other words of which a sentence is composed; to denote this elevation,

vation, the Greeks placed an accentual mark over such syllable inclining from the left hand, (thus ' ) and ending in a point *above*, towards the right hand, which they called the acute accent; no other accentual mark, of course, was necessary upon the same word, unless the voice likewise fell again upon the very same syllable, before the sound of it was ended \*; in

\* It is no very easy matter to let the voice rise and fall upon the same syllable properly; but it has a striking effect when it is done with a delicate precision, particularly in tender pathetic passages. The circumflex appears to me to have a great analogy with what is called the appoggiature in music, which is equally applicable in reading as in singing; if we may judge from the form of the accentual mark in the Greek language, the acute was heard *first*, and the voice fell by a proper interval to the grave; but in the application of the appoggiature, the voice is at liberty to move in a contrary direction from the grave to the acuter sound, as the force of effect may require; this would be an inversion of the Greek circumflex, and I have not the least doubt in my *own* mind, but the Greeks availed themselves of this vocal power occasionally, in the use of the circumflex, that is, whenever the voice rose and fell upon the same syllable.

such

such case they added another mark called a grave, beginning from the right hand and ending in a point above towards the left, (thus `) and which leaning against the former joined it at the top. These two characters, when separated, were called the acute accentual mark and the grave accentual mark, but when they were joined together *over the same syllable* after this manner ( ^ ) they were considered as one compounded mark, and called a *circumflex*. If the acute accentual mark, as hath been hinted, was placed upon any syllable of a word, the voice was supposed, of course, to be lower upon every other syllable of it; but the acute mark was not placed upon every word, the *grave* mark was sometimes placed singly over the last syllable of a word, *instead of an acute*, to point out that the voice must be lowered upon the last syllable of the word, lest if it were kept up, such an elevation of voice  
 should



should occasion the succeeding word to adhere to it; the grave accentual mark was placed in like manner over the last syllable of any word which finished a period, (when the voice naturally falls to a close upon the key note) notwithstanding such word, in other situations, according to the established manner of pronouncing it, required the voice to be raised upon its last syllable. I may here remind you, that all words whose last syllable was raised, were called *oxytones*, as all words whose last syllable was lowered were called *barytones*, and that whenever an *oxytone* was marked with the grave accent upon its last syllable at the close of a period, or in order to distinguish it from a succeeding word whose first syllable was acuted, notwithstanding the voice in uttering it was then lowered agreeably to the grave mark of accentuation; such word was not considered as a

barytone, from either of these *accidental* circumstances of situation, but still retained its original name of an oxytone. The term *προσῳδιαί*, which was given to the accentual marks as well as to the actual modulations of the voice, (to which alone they *properly* belong) hath misled many learned men to suppose they were intended only as mere *musical* notes, not considering that speaking in early ages was called *singing*, and that we now term a just manner of raising and lowering the voice, a *melodious* inflection of it, as all our measured movements were called *dancing*, and the poets called their measured rhythm *song*, without any respect to music in our ordinary idea of it. Accent then, as it implies a modulation of the voice, that is, the rise or fall of it, is applicable either to common speech, or to singing, the distinction between which hath been already mentioned in my first letter, (page 12,) and

and shall be again taken notice of more particularly.

I shall close this with observing, that in most editions of the Greek classics when a word occurs which has no accentual mark over it, (for there be some editions of late which have rejected the accentual marks entirely) the omission is probably owing to its being so closely joined in pronunciation with another word, that it coalesces and becomes, as it were, a syllable of *that* word to which its sound is connected; this is the case of those monosyllables called atonics,  $\delta$ ,  $\eta$ ,  $\theta$ ,  $\alpha$ ,  $\epsilon$ ,  $\kappa$ ,  $\nu$ ,  $\chi$ ,  $\epsilon$ ,  $\omega$ ,  $\epsilon$ ,  $\epsilon$ ,  $\epsilon$ , and frequently of those words called enclitics, or words which lean upon a foregoing word, when no contradistinction is intended to be pointed out; but in cases where opposition was designed, an accentual mark *at least* was placed over them, the effect of which in utterance gave a quick sharp

stroke upon the ear, which had, in some degree, a similar effect (*in this situation*) to the power of emphasis, and may have occasioned its being confounded with it.

I am,

Your affectionate, &c.

## LETTER XIII.

MY DEAR C.

NOTWITHSTANDING the different wants, and customs, and manners, of different nations, which together with the influence of climates upon the organs of speech themselves, as upon the dispositions and tempers of the mind, may have produced no less variety in the utterance and expression of their several languages; yet all men necessarily agree in a raising and lowering the voice either more or less upon some syllables of a word, as they do in pronouncing others with more force, and in letting the voice continue longer upon them than upon others; for whatever may be supposed of a *monotony* in



*speaking*, it is a thing impossible. A variation in the tones, and tune of voice, with respect to the different members of a sentence, does not escape general observation, though it hath not been so commonly remarked, that there are inflections of voice, upon the syllables of a word, similar to those upon the words, which compose the members of a period: but let any unprejudiced person (*with a tolerable ear*) consult his own practice, and he will find that he does not utter even a dissyllable, without a relative elevation of his voice upon one of them. There are some persons, it is true, who are not capable of distinguishing this elevation; but whoever is sensible of such a defect in his organs of hearing, whatever his abilities may be in respect of learning, would act right to be cautious of determining upon a subject, of which it is impossible to form a true judgment, without possessing  
some

some natural feelings which *he* wants, οὔτε γὰρ ἐνδέχεται φάυλως αἰσθανόμενον. εὖ λέγειν περὶ τέτων ὧν μὴδενᾶ τρόπον αἰσθάνεται, says Aristoxenus ; a passage, which it is not improbable was pointed by him against the managers of a similar dispute with that conducted lately by some modern scholars, whose opinions upon a mere subject of antiquity, would have been regarded with attention, if not looked upon as decisive ; but where the enquiry is concerning the nature of articulated sounds, whether the voice is really inflected, or not inflected in the pronunciation of all words, especially those which consist of more than one syllable, and whether such inflection necessarily affects the time of each syllable ; as these are matters of fact to be determined jointly by the ear, and by certain principles of philosophy, they can never be ascertained by classical learning only, nor is there any reason for our

sitting down by the decision of the old grammarians in an affair of which we are as competent judges as they were ; and it is no arrogance to affirm, that the doctrine of *sounds* is altogether as well understood, and hath, perhaps, been better explained by the moderns than by the ancients.

I am,

My dear C, &c.

L E T T E R

## LETTER XIV.

DEAR C.

THE only essential difference between the notes of song and common speech, which I hinted that I should explain to you, consists in this, that their intervals in song, are perfectly distinct; whereas in speech, or conversation, they rise and fall by such a continuous wave-like motion, as renders it difficult to fix the precise point of *elevation* or *depression*, to each note; the voice is *nevertheless* most certainly *intended* and *remitted* within a certain scale, and the utterance of language is but a different species of singing from what is usually termed so: λέγεται δὴ καὶ λογῶδες τι μέλος τὸ συγκείμενον ἐκ

τῶν

τῶν προσωδιῶν τὸ ἐν τοῖς ὀνόμασι; φυσικὸν γὰρ τὸ ἐπιτείνειν καὶ ανίεναι ἐν τῷ διαλέγεσθαι. Compare Aristox. b. i.—Euclid's Introduction to Harmonic, at the beginning. Gaudentius, *περι φωνης*; and Ariftides Quintilian, *περι ὑλῆς μεσσηῆς*.

The *place of the voice*, that is, the space through which it moves in ordinary conversation, indeed, is limited, by Dionysius, on the *construction of periods*, to the system of a diapente or fifth; and a careful attention to our manner of speaking, will convince us, that it rarely rises to the *acute*, by more than three tones and a hemitone, or falls to the *grave* by a greater interval; and I suspect it never, or very seldom rises and falls so much.

Taking it for granted, that we use *inflections of voice*, or that the voice is *intended and remitted* in speaking, let us in the next place consider, whether the elevation of it, by the acute accent, hath  
any



any effect upon a syllable as to its length ; that is, whether the *acute* accent necessarily increases the time of a short syllable, to which it is frequently applied, or continues that of a long one, so as to alter the due proportion of quantity, as it is called, in either case.

Now this is the opinion of some great scholars, who have written in favour of retaining the Greek accentual marks, as well as of others who have proposed the utter rejection of them ; and both parties arguing from a mistake concerning their use and application, the conclusion on each side, hath been inconsistent with the Græcian elocution ; those who have written in favour of the accentual marks being properly retained, maintaining, at the same time, the propriety of altering the times of syllables, according to their supposed powers at least in prose ; whilst others have rejected them entirely as absurd, be-  
cause

cause of their presumed inconsistency with quantity, which the antients never violated either in prose or verse.

The accentual characters having been added to poetical compositions has strangely puzzled those who considered them as marks of quantity, for that the quantity of syllables in *verse* should be regulated agreeably to the supposed power of the acute accent, was too glaring an absurdity to be supported; nothing then remained in this case, but with Vossius to consider the accentual characters as misapplied marks of emphasis, or otherwise as mere musical notes.

The supposition that an acute accent always *lengthened* the time of a syllable, which some learned men have boldly asserted, either to favour a dismissal of the accentual characters entirely, or to support an opinion that the quantity ought to be changed when it was applied to a short syllable,

syllable, is owing to a mistake of the manner in which the voice is supposed to raise the acute in speaking, which the least acquaintance with the nature of musical notes, would have prevented. These gentlemen conceived, as I have heard them urge it with an air of triumph, that in giving an acute accent to a syllable, we begin to sound it in a certain tone, and then go on to elevate that *tone* of it, by which means the length of the syllable, as they affirmed, would undoubtedly be protracted; for some time must be taken up, in passing from one pitch or degree of tune to another; whereas this is not the method of elevating a syllable in common speech, (and *reading* is nothing more than *speaking* a set composition) we do not begin to pronounce a syllable in one tone and pitch, and then raise the pitch with which we begin it, but the syllable is begun and ended in the same elevated tone,

that

that is, it is uttered in elevation. Now it is exceedingly plain, that to *begin* and *end* a syllable in an acute, or a high pitch of tune in the scale, can have no more influence upon its length, than beginning and ending it in a grave or lower pitch; but an acuter note must always render itself more distinguishable than one of the same length which is graver, because the strokes of the acute vibrations, upon the nerves expanded over the cochlea of the ear being smarter, their impressions upon the mind will continue a longer time, which with those who are not accurate judges of sounds, may be mistaken for a longer time of the note itself; even where the notes are the same both in time and tune, a shriller note will be distinguished above one that is fuller, as in the case of a treble voice singing in unison with a tenor. In truth, could the elevation only of a syllable, or its utterance in a higher pitch,

pitch, have any effect upon its length, it should rather be to hasten the time of such syllable, and, in reality, to shorten it : a probability of the antients doing this in general, that is, of their pronouncing every acuted syllable shorter than one with a grave accent, might, perhaps, be inferred from the common sense and use of the word οξύτης, which implied quickness as well as sharpness, (το μὲν οξύ κινεῖ τὴν αἰσθησιν ἐν ὀλίγῳ χρόνῳ, ἐπὶ πολὺ ; το δὲ βαρὺ ἐν πολλῷ ἐπ' ὀλίγον· Arist. de anima, b. ii. c. 8. Prob. sect. xix. Quæst. 21, 37.) and an acute tone in the scale of music, is relatively quick and piercing, which admits a mathematical *proof*, for it might be demonstrated by the divisions of the monochord, that the acuteness of a note, arises from the greater number of vibrations performed in a given time ; but if it is necessary for a certain number of coinciding vibrations to be heard, before the  
the



the ear can determine the relative gravity or acuteness, of one note with respect to another, as the vibrations of a shorter string, or of any body producing an *acute* tone, will be performed *sooner* than the vibrations of a longer string, producing a *graver* tone, it seems more likely from hence, that we should always rather *shorten* an acuted syllable, than *lengthen* it, and that the smartness of the stroke upon the auditory nerve in *this* case, deceives those who think otherwise \*. The converse of the observation is just, with respect to a grave accent, which if it doth affect the time of a syllable, from what hath been advanced, should rather contribute to *lengthen* it; but, in fact, a co-

\* The effect of a shriller tone and a higher pitch of tune, is evident from a peal of eight bells, in which the treble shall frequently seem to be a double octave above the tenor, though it be precisely no more than an eighth, and its tone appears to continue longer upon the ear than the tone of the other bells below it.

inciding

inciding return of the vibrations, which enable us to determine the gravity or acuteness of a tone, bearing a very inconsiderable proportion to the time of a syllable, in *any* language, cannot necessarily influence the quantity of it; and you will distinguish here between the *probability*, that in speaking a syllable in an *acute* tone, we conform to the efficient cause of such a tone, by giving a shorter sensible duration of time to the syllable in vocal utterance, and an absolute *proof* that we do so; but that we *must* always *lengthen* an acuted syllable, hath not the least shadow of support from fact, or from the nature of sounds, and is an opinion founded entirely upon the assertion of some hard-eared grammarians, though it is absolutely inconsistent with experience.

When Nature herself speaks, it seems needless to call in any other evidence, but there are, who think the authority of A-

Aristotle far better; tell one of these bigotted scholars, that an attention to his own voice or that of another person in common discourse, would sufficiently convince him of the truth of what hath been advanced, concerning the distinct nature of accent and quantity; *næ haud scis quam nunc furdo narras fabulam; it is still impossible, he will urge, to pronounce a syllable with an acute accent and short quantity together, without violating the latter, that is, it must be impossible to utter a short syllable in an elevated tone, without lengthening it beyond its prescribed relative time, which is the sum total of his arguments.* Appeal to the practice of musicians, the circumstances you will be answered are not alike; there may be a power of doing that, in the divided system of notes, which the continuous will not admit of; produce at last the authority of Dionysius, or of Aristotle, and it is well if their *express*  
*words,*

words, have force enough to convince him, for it is ten to one but his pride is piqued, and he endeavours to support the credit of his judgment, by the blunders of some deaf commentator, upon *τασις* or *χρονος*, to the end of the chapter.

I am, &c.

## LETTER XV.

MY DEAR C.

**F**OR an example of the disagreeable effect of improper inflexions of voice, let us attend to the reading of the vulgar in the country, or to that of any person whose natural judgment in the right use of what are called the tones hath been vitiated, we shall find the effect here very displeasing ; and, upon examination it will appear, that it is not a monotony which disgusts us in these cases, but an immodious inexpressive elevation and cadence of voice as opposed to a just and graceful management of it, either with regard to single words, or to the several members of a period.

It



It was to determine, therefore, where the inflections of voice, respecting its heighth or depression, were to be placed that the Greek accentual marks were invented, for even during the purity of the Greek language, and when the science of speaking was carried to its utmost perfection, there were, doubtless, some who were more compleat masters of elocution in the pronunciation of it, than others ; such of their youth, therefore, who were to be brought up to speak in public, were probably put under the care of the best orators in this respect, to be instructed in the elegancies of pronunciation, and the accentual points were applied to show where these inflections should be made, which when they had sufficiently availed themselves of in private, they were enabled to speak, or to read in publick without them, and this is nothing more than might be expected from a people so scrupulously

nice, as the Greeks were, upon every occasion where the perfection and melody of their language were concerned.

When this propriety of pronunciation began to decline, and it was a fashion for the principal families of Rome either to send their children to Athens for education, or to engage tutors from thence to instruct them in the genius of the Greek language at home, these accentual marks were very soon introduced into their manuscripts in *general*, but not till this time; and hence that argument against the use of them, from their *not being found* in the more antient manuscripts or monumental inscriptions, has no force; for from the nature of the thing, it is highly improbable that they *should* be there; but since some great modern scholars, have thought the acute accentual mark was intended to determine the place of a *prolonged syllabic emphasis*, as it is evident from their *practice*

*tice* that they do, it is no wonder that the absurd jargon this produced made those who had the least delicacy of ear, desirous of rejecting the accentual doctrine entirely, as it was thus misunderstood.

The first accentual marks, then, were to determine in what places to elevate and depress the voice upon the several syllables of words, but it doth not follow from hence, that they could point out precisely *how high* the voice was to be raised, and, of course, *how low* it was to be depressed on each syllable; it was sufficient to show *where* this elevation and depression should be made, whilst the relative degree of either was to be governed by the taste of the speaker, with respect to the sentiment to be conveyed: he was confined, indeed, nearly to the system of a diapente, according to Dionysius, so as not to exceed three tones and a half, in rising to an acute, or to the same limit in descending from the

acute to a grave, but he was not obliged to ascend so high, and to descend so low. If it were required to give an exact idea of the rise and fall of the voice in the utterance of the Greek language, supposing the accentual marks, as they are placed in our printed editions of the Greek authors, to be just, and the rise of the voice to the acute accent and the fall of it to the grave to be within the compass of a third or a fifth, it would be no difficult matter to accomplish it, by the application of notes to a few sentences, and any person with a tolerable ear and voice would be able pretty exactly to imitate the manner of the Greek pronunciation, so far as respects the *melody* of the language, notwithstanding the prosodial notes differ from the musical in their continuous wavelike progression, so as to render it not very easy to point out the exact height to which each note rises or falls. I have supposed  
the

the place of the voice, or that space it ran through in their pronunciation, according to Dionysius, not to *exceed* the limits of a fifth ; but I am convinced, in my own opinion, that the acute accent very rarely exceeded that of three hemitones, as frequently in our own it does not rise above the height of a diesis, or quarter of a tone. Thus much for accent, which I trust, my dear Charles, is sufficiently intelligible to you upon the whole, as I have endeavoured to be clear. We come next to emphasis, but enough for the present.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R



## LETTER XVI.

DEAR CHARLES,

**E**MPHASIS may be defined a certain spirited manner of utterance, which doth not *necessarily* alter the *tune* or *pitch* of the voice, but respects merely the *tone* of it, independent either of its acuteness or gravity, or of the time that it is to be continued.

Whatever it is which gives emphasis, whether the loudness \*, or aspirated

\* The loudness of a note is apt to be confounded with the height of it, whereas they are perfectly distinct; the height or pitch of the voice in the scale is wholly owing to the degree of aperture given to the glottis, whereas loudness with respect to any tone, depends upon the force with which the air is driven through the given aperture.

rough-

roughness of the voice, in pronunciation, or both together, for neither of these alone, precisely answers to my idea ; it implies speaking so as to make a more forceable and a more distinct impression upon the hearer, either in the utterance of a syllable, of a word, or of a sentence, by altering the motion of the air in passing through the trachea with a given aperture of the glottis, and it hath the same meaning in general, applied to sounds, that energy hath, with respect to corporal action : but it is to be observed, that although it is most *usually begun with the pitch*, and doth not necessarily lengthen the time, yet that it may be added *afterward*, just as the same note may be swelled, and continued to any length we think proper to give a syllable, &c. as we judge will be most suitable for producing the intended effect.

The proper use of emphasis, therefore, as well as accent, must depend entirely upon

upon the taste and judgment of the speaker or reader ; and it would be impossible to lay down any precise rules concerning it, that could answer the end proposed, quippe demonstrari nisi opere in ipso non potest ; nor have the antients, so far as I can recollect, invented any mark, by which even its place was to be distinguished. You know that I always read in the key of F, in other words, that I close every period in that note ; now suppose any syllable of a period required an emphasis to distinguish it, or give it more expression, and let it be supposed that such syllable would be properly expressed in the note D, in this instance retaining that aperture of the glottis which is necessary to sound the note D, if I force the air through it in uttering the syllable I intend should be emphatic, with greater velocity than in uttering the other syllables, this would give a degree of loudness or strength to  
such

such syllable above the rest, and render it more distinguishable than others in the same period, which is the proper idea of a syllable or a word being emphatic; and I have only to remind you, that it is very aptly illustrated in music by the extraordinary degree of force with which we breathe through a wind instrument, in order to give superior strength to any particular note, without altering its legitimate height in the scale or gamut, or the extraordinary pressure which we give to the bow upon the strings of a violin.

## LETTER XVII.

DEAR C.

THE learned Isaac Vossius hath attributed the power of the Grecian music, to an exact observance of its movements in a rythmus suited to those passions and affections of the mind, which were intended to be excited, and by which the Greek musicians were said to have gained such an absolute command over them, that they could raise, or moderate, or change them at their pleasure; but upon what particular principles, or by what rules the rythmus of their melody was conducted to attain this end, I believe they have nowhere laid down with certainty. A treatise upon the pulse, supposed to have been written



written by Herophilus, a physician, distinguished all the simple and combined arterial pulsations by the names of the several simple and combined poetic feet, which in a medical application, I am inclined to think would have its use, as I might acquaint Dr. Hay, my physician, by letter, that my pulse beats anapæsts and choriambuses alternately, at this very time I am writing to you ; what does this portend trow ? and that yesterday it danced iambics, with the second Pæon ; but this anecdote of Herophilus seems to intimate, that the rythmus of the Græcian melody, which precisely corresponded with that of their poetry, (whose motions certainly have an influence upon the heart) was established upon the order of its beats under the agitation of different passions ; and if I rightly understand him, Aristides Quintilian, one of the most ingenious amongst the Greek musical writers, seems likewise to ascribe  
the

the same reciprocal effects upon the mind from the arterial pulsations, that the mind produces upon the arteries, and to hint that both were to be influenced after a similar manner, by an artificial movement of the rythmus in melody and song : were this an established truth, the powers of the Greek \* musicians would no longer be

\* If the Grecian music in its rythmus copied the arterial pulsations, it might be termed, with some propriety, in this respect, an imitative art, which music certainly is not in any other ; our musicians, it is true, do sometimes introduce an imitation, which is properly thrown into the symphony, as in Mr. Handel's song " So cooes the Turtle ;" but the best masters *never* attempt to touch the passions, and to give an imitation at the same time. If instrumental music then is not to be considered as an imitative art, or as such in a very low degree, this consequence follows, that it never can be applied with propriety to any poetical composition, which is purely descriptive ; whereas almost all our sonnet writers seem to think they never can be too florid in description for music ; or they have attempted to be pestilently witty ; music indeed may be *forced* into union with such poetry, but the attempt

be so very doubtful ; but, for my own part, I must acknowledge myself an infidel with respect to the wonderful tales of antient instrumental music, and ascribe its extraordinary effects, if they ever were produced, chiefly to the force of that sublime poetry of which it was the accompaniment. Instrumental music, by itself, is capable of inflaming the appetites, whose objects, in general, are fixed by the constitution of our nature, and of exciting vague emotions of a higher kind ; but I believe it never raises what are properly called passions by its own intrinsic power, although it hath a natural power of allay-

attempt to set these painted odes to music with effect, is truly as ridiculous as to think of playing a landscape upon the violin. In truth, *music* is the language of passion, and is best suited to the ardours of devotion, which it heightens and improves, or it is a proper accompaniment of the tender affections, with which it is in perfect harmony, and of which it is expressive ; but with wit it can have no connection, and an *epigrammatic sonnet* is to the last degree absurd.

ing them when raised ; it may, indeed, excite *emotions*, as I have said, which differ from *passion* in this respect, that they do not include such a desire as carries us out to action for want of a determined object, but an emotion seldom fails to grow into a passion whenever suitable objects present themselves, apparently worthy of our pursuit with a probable expectation of acquiring their possession or enjoyment.

I look upon instrumental music, therefore, as it acts upon the nervous system in exciting vague emotions, in the same light in which we may consider the action of fermented liquors, or of certain drugs and medicines which dispose men either to a moral or a vicious behaviour, as objects and circumstances happen to occur ; that is, agreeably to their accidental accompaniments ; men are flushed with insolence, indulge a vicious luxury, or whilst they listen to the strains of soothing melody,  
and

and associate with the virtuous and benevolent, they find themselves more disposed to practice every virtue; but these worthy inclinations may go off, as well as those that are unfriendly to the social affections, for want of objects suited to the frame of mind being offered at the instant; for to raise an emotion into a passion we must be so circumstanced, as to have an object which agrees with the particular propensity excited by the power of melody, either actually before us, or strongly impressed upon the imagination; but these are accidental circumstances. It is thus that some persons, under the influence of ebriety, are either good natured and charitable, or capricious, ill tempered and quarrelsome, they give way to lust, or cruelty, or they enjoy the transports of a virtuous friendship and affection, as the situation they are placed in gives them an opportunity of indulgence.

The pleasure which we receive from music and poetry, the latter of which is



properly the music of language, ought not to be considered as their ultimate end; delight is but their secondary object; and to aim at this alone, or to consider it as principal, is to prostitute to a lower, what were given us for nobler and more exalted purposes. *Music and Poetic Numbers*, whilst they sweeten the labours of life and cheer the heart, by alleviating its sorrow, its anxiety, and cares, at the same time should be directed as far as the nature of them will permit, to inspire the sentiments of religion and virtue. ἔτε γὰρ ἅπασα τέρψις μεμπτόν, ἔτε τῆς μουσικῆς αὕτη τέλος, ἀλλ' ἡ μὲν ψυχαγωγία κατὰ τὸ συμβεβηκὸς ὃ προκείμενος δε ἡ πρὸς ἀρέτην ὠφέλεια. Arist. Quint. b. 11. Neque omnis oblectatio culpanda, neque Musices hæc est finis, animi quidem delinimen est per accidens, scopus vero propositus, virtutis adjumentum. It should be the business of education, my dear Charles, to cultivate the study

study of the polite arts, and even of what are called accomplishments only, in order to heighten and improve the more refined pleasures of the senses; not to accompany the grosser, (which too often is the case) but to act as a balance against their violence and impetuosity; and in this light they deserve to be considered, as more than innocent and gentile amusements, they become a rational employment and almost virtues. *Delicacy of taste*, will, probably, secure a young man from falling into mean unsocial vices, but almost *certainly* will prevent a long continuance in them; his ideas of beauty, regularity, and harmony, will extend themselves to *manners*, and the same principle that informs him

—— how four sweet music is

When time is broke, and no proportion kept,

will naturally lead him to the moral conclusion of the poet——

so is it in the music of men's lives.

A similar sentiment is finely expressed by Cicero, in his Offices, from a translation of which I am inclined to think that Shakespear received the hint. Take the passage entire—*Ut in Fidibus aut tibiis, quamvis paulum discrepent, id tamen a sciente animadverti solet ; sic vivendum est in vitâ ne forte quid discrepet ; vel multo etiam magis, quo major & melior actionum quam sonorum est concentus.*

I am, &c.

LETTER

## LETTER XVIII.

MY DEAR C.

**I** WAS once asked by a person who had no great skill in music, how it comes to pass that we are so much pleased with some tunes above others. The question from him surprized me; and I was not prepared to give any satisfactory answer to it, more especially as it seemed to involve another question at the same time, namely, why we are pleased with musical notes, or with any succession of them at all. To get rid of it for the present, I could only say, that in the number of those persons who have naturally an ear for music, some might have improved their musical taste more than others, and rendered themselves

better judges of what is elegant ; why we are pleased with musical notes at all must be resolved into the good pleasure of Him who formed us. Reflecting upon the subject more particularly afterward, I conceived that the delight we receive from agreeable melody, might be referred to the very same *principle* which takes place in all the fine arts; namely, to our love of *variety under certain restrictions*, in a succession of musical sounds. How our fondness for variety operates under certain modifications, with respect to lines and forms, is finely explained by Mr. Hogarth in his *Analysis of Beauty* ; some portion of variety is necessary in every thing that pleases us ; and in melody the greater that variety is, without confusion, provided it passes in succession from note to note by concinnous and harmonic intervals, the greater is the pleasure it affords us : but the movement in these several passages of a tune must likewise be neither too quick, nor too



too slow to render it agreeable ; to explain what I mean, if the succession be too *quick*, its celerity may not suffer one impulse or vibration of the nerves to be continued long enough to produce its proper effect upon the mind, before the mode of it being changed, it is hindered by another note, or a succession of them, which may have a tendency to excite a different emotion, and prevent the former from completing what was begun. Again, if a succession of notes be too *slow*, both the ear and the mind must be hurt by a continuance of the same impressions upon the nerves spread over the cochlea, by the strokes with which the malleolus acts upon the *same* part of the tympanum, or more probably, by keeping that organ itself too long upon the stretch in expectancy at the *same* pitch of tension ; but whatever hurts the body by a sameness of agitation in any manner, whether by im-

pulses

pulses or vibrations given to the nerves, or by a continuance of their extensions at the same tone, must produce correspondent disagreeable feelings in the soul itself, which is so connected with the corporeal part of us, that they must sympathize with each other, and suffer or rejoice together.

A desire of completion is, in all cases, natural to the human mind, which doth not rest without attaining its end; and there is, moreover, a secret pleasure annexed to every step of one progression towards it. We delight in tracing such connections, and suffer when they escape us. How uneasy are we at dropping a single link in our most trifling reveries! and how dissatisfied with what never has been finished. Again in considering any thing as *a whole*, where the connection of its parts is evident at *first* sight, however we may commend the simplicity of its construction, we are not greatly delighted;

ed ; where we are obliged to labour in the discovery of its constituent parts, or their application to a certain purpose, the trouble of it offends us ; and unless it is a matter of importance to us, we generally turn away from it with disgust ; but there is a simplicity with intricacy, which affords the mind an agreeable exercise without fatigue ; and whilst it leads on the imagination in an easy chase, is evidently bringing us nearer to our end, though by gentle degrees, with a continued entertainment of variety and satisfaction. This is what Milton means by the *melting voice through mazes running*, a smoothly gliding from, and balking of the cadence when the ear is prepared for its reception, so as to lead it on in an agreeable suspense, till the design of the composer being attained, both the taste and judgment are satisfied with a full close upon the key note. I might add, that the more unexpected this balking

ing

ing of the cadence, and return to the progression of the melody is, provided no harlequin skips or violent and unnatural changes from one key to another are made, the greater is the pleasure we receive from it. Upon this the whole art of carrying on the melody of a simple tune may be said to depend, as well as the composition of more laboured pieces of music, consisting of a variety of subjects, each of which must be conducted after a similar manner, whilst at the same time they are united together as a *whole*. I cannot help transcribing for you in this letter, a passage I have lately met with in the celebrated Des Cartes, respecting the subject I am speaking of: *Amongst the objects of sense, he saith, that is not the most grateful to the mind which is most easily perceived, nor that on the contrary which is apprehended with much difficulty; but that which is perceived not so easily, as that the natural desire of*  
*pursuit*

*pursuit (whereby the senses are carried towards their proper objects) is checked by an immediate attainment, nor yet so hardly, as that the senses are thereby tired, and finally we may observe that variety is the most grateful in all things.* Certain I am, that it is the source of our delight, in whatever is addressed to the Fancy or Imagination, and that it appears to be the great principle of Beauty in the works of Nature.

I am,

Dear Charles, your's, &c.



## LETTER XIV.

DEAR C.

**I**F *you* are not tired with the remarks upon Accent and Emphasis, I declare to you that I *am* so, most heartily ; and I foresee that *this* will be a long letter upon the subject of *Quantity*, do what I can ; but for our mutual comfort, it is the last upon these grammatical adjuncts of sound.

In every language upon earth, there are some syllables capable of being pronounced in a much shorter time than others, which is owing either to the number, or to the order of arrangement, or to the nature of the letters which compose them ; and as in every thing where relation is concerned, there must be a standard, to which

we

we may refer those things, whose degree of relation we want to ascertain ; *short* and *long* syllables in any particular country, were mutually referred to each other, in order to determine their relative differences ; but no absolute measure, either of the one or the other, could possibly be fixed, as that syllable which is very short in one case, might, from a difference of apposition with respect to another syllable, become longer, and vice versâ. It is farther to be remarked, that from a peculiarity of organization in different nations, arising from a difference of habitual practice in the use of their organs of speech, or from some other accidental varieties in their formation, what is counted a long syllable in one country, may, possibly, be a short one in another ; because those consonants which are so difficult of utterance to one people, as to make a syllable long, may to another be so easy to pronounce, that

that they may speak them as fast again, and of course make the same syllable short, with reference to the long syllables of their own language; or they may be capable of speaking double the number of consonants, in the same time, that the natives of another country utter what they deem a long syllable, in which long syllable there may be, in reality, no more than half the number of consonants employed, and from hence it follows, that in considering the poetry of any two languages, which differ in the use of more or fewer consonants, a comparison is not to be made between the long syllables of one country, and the long syllables of another; but between the powers of utterance and their long and short syllables in each nation respectively, and that nothing can be more absurd than to think of regulating the prosodial quantity, or length of syllables, in one language, by the rules which fix it in another.

The

The Greeks and Romans measured the time of a long syllable by that of two short ones \*, and this proportion, though by no means necessary, seems to be approved by all nations who are acquainted with their literature.

The *comparative* length of these times being once settled, the next step would be to unite long and short syllables into metrical feet, in such a manner, as to blend uniformity and variety together as much as possible, and to determine the relative value of different feet, thus variously constructed, amongst themselves; whilst some were *perfectly uniform* in their times and syllables, in order to become the means of still greater variety, by a judicious inter-

\* This determination followed from their considering a short syllable as the minimum of utterance, so that the next rational addition of time to its continuance, must, of course, render it double of its former length. See Augustin's Treatise on Music, book ii. ch. iii. and Aristox. book i.

posal of them with others ; thus the anapaest and the dactyl, as *ānīmōs* and *cārminā* have each an even number of times, with an odd number of syllables, namely, four times and three syllables ; the iambus and trochee, as *pīōs* and *sērvāt*, have an odd number of times with an even number of syllables ; the pyrrhic, as *dēūs*, an even number of syllables with an even number of times ; the spondee, as *sīmplēx*, hath an even number of syllables, with double the number of times, and the several degrees of excess in the times above the syllables, as likewise the precedence of the long or short syllables in each foot, still served to increase their variety, as may appear at the 171st and 172d pages, in which I have given you their several classes.

It is after this manner that an artificial metre would be established conformable to the movements of natural sounds, as they



they are adapted to express the general predominant dispositions and passions of each respective people, though some particular persons would apply themselves to strike out other measures, by compounding the original feet, and excel in such measures as they were prompted to, by an indulgence of their *peculiar* tempers and dispositions of mind. Thus the *general* character and manners of each nation, as they must greatly contribute to form its language, so every language would consequently most abound with such feet and measures, as were expressive of the character, and manners of the people, either strong and manly, or effeminate and weak; and it is for this reason that the popular songs in every country as they burst from the heart, and are adapted to a suitable national rhythmus, even exclusive of their subjects and sentiments, will enable us to form some idea of the natural inclinations

of the inhabitants: Ulloa describing the people upon the banks of the Maranon, observes, that the genius and tempers of the Yameo and Omaguas Indians correspond to the difference of their tongues, and that in proportion as the dispositions of the latter are less barbarous and violent, their language is softer and more agreeable to the ear in its movements, whilst that of the Yameo Indians has a turbulence and harshness suited to the intractability and ruggedness of their manners. I am afraid you would think that I was indulging a taste for ridicule, rather than a regard to strict truth, if I were to tell you there is a particular part of London, where the remarks above made may be exemplified, without going so far as the inland parts of Africa or South America to hunt for Indians. But, I assure you, it was a frequent source of entertainment to me when I lived in town, in the com-  
pany

pany of a friend, who was then a student at Gray's Inn, to compare the language of the inhabitants of this district with their countenances and their manners. The periods of the English language, which easily run into iambic feet, are characteristic of the genius of the people in general, which is impetuous, resolute, and sarcastic; and the measure of our poetry is, for the most part, iambic, like the old ballad of Piercy and Douglas, which is alternately dimeter iambic, and dimeter iambic brachycatalectic; as our heroic verse is trimeter iambic, with the same deficiency. Again the native gravity of the Spaniards is thought to have raised their tongue in point of dignity and grandeur, by the solemnity of its movements above the other languages in Europe, and the Hebrew hath been said to be almost wholly made up of iambusses, spondees, anapaests, and molossi \*, the most noble and gene-

\* Aristides Quint. book ii. p. 98. Meibom.

rous feet of all others \*, and in a peculiar manner adapted to the solemnity of religious worship ; whereas the language of Greece inhabited by several petty nations differing from each other in their climates, their soil, and their dispositions, but united at the same time in the love of liberty, which calls forth every power of body and mind, had all the possible variety of feet that are requisite to any species

\* Those feet are considered as most manly and generous, which have the greatest number of times, and end in one or more long syllables ; and those, on the contrary, which conclude with a short syllable, are considered as effeminate and weak, except the dactyl and palimbacchius, the latter of which is called, by Dionysius, the bacchius, who represents it as capable of inspiring dignity and respect, and the former, as peculiarly elegant in prose ; it is to be doubted, however, whether the merit of the dactyl is not chiefly owing to the stability of the spondee with which it is usually connected.

The simple feet are no more than *four*, the pyrric, the trochee, (or choree) the iambus, and the spondee.

The trisyllabic feet are eight, compounded of one of the original simple feet, and the half of another, whose times  
are

cies of poetical or prosaic numbers. The *appearance* of liberty, even after they had *really* lost it, made it necessary for them to cultivate the arts of eloquence and persuasion, which prevented the corruption of their genius, and continued them the unrivalled masters of prosaic and poetical composition to the age of Cicero and Horace; but however excellent the taste and abilities of these great men were, the Roman

are equal, that is, the half of a spondee, or the half of a pyrric.

By compounding each of the four original simple feet with each, and changing the order of their sequence, the Greeks formed sixteen tetrasyllabic feet, and again by compounding the second order of feet with the first, they had thirty-two more, each foot consisting of five syllables, and as every thing in which they engaged was carried to a degree of extravagance, they compounded these again, till at last the number of their metrical feet was not less than one hundred and twenty-four, every one of which they pretended had a peculiar power either in regulating or exciting some passion or affection of the mind. I shall subjoin a scheme of the three first classes, from whence you may form an idea of the other.



language was stubborn and inflexible, and their metre requiring an emphatic sound sometimes upon the last syllable of a word, which their pronunciation did not properly allow, (the ill effect of which was not to be compensated by any transposition of the order of the words) this defect inevitably spoiled their numbers, and gave them an air of stiffness which even the prejudice of custom, could not reconcile to a Roman ear: several instances of this might be given from the writers of Latin poetry, but the est hederæ vis, & patruæ verbera linguæ, in the xiith ode of the 3d book of Horace, will sufficiently point out to you what I mean. There are, however, many other cases where the Romans in placing their accustomed stroke of emphasis, (as it appears at least to me) could hardly avoid, in some degree, injuring the rythmus, though the quantity of a word was not violated by it so as to alter the  
metre ;

metre: how they managed the pronunciation in these cases, I do not pretend to say; it is plain from Quintillian, l. 12, chap. x. [who, by the way, confounded the acute accent with the long quantity.] that they considered the thing as an imperfection in their language; and probably the rythmus may be more capable of elegance in every tongue, as the prolonged emphasis which the same author seems to have confounded with the effect of the circumflex, most frequently coincides with the naturally long quantity; but if this be the case, as I *presume* it to be, it evidently shows the absurdity of some modern innovations in our own, by throwing the emphatic stroke as far back as possible, without any regard to the time of the syllable to which we apply it, as upon the first syllable of the word *refractory*; and we may, possibly, in a few years come to pronounce *repũgnant*, and

words

words of like construction, after the same manner, thus offering a violence to natural pronounciation which must hurt the melody of our language, without any advantage being so much as pretended \*.

\* There are but few words whose syllables may not be reduced to some one of the metrical feet. *Pedes autem qui syllabam longam in initio habent et in brevia desinunt tempora, motus habent imbecilles, minimeq; viriles; contrarium verò fit in illis pedibus qui in longum desinunt tempus: et quidem quanto remotior a principio Pedis, sit syllaba longa, seu feriens, tanto fortiores motus, quanto vero eadem propior initio, tanto minus ponderis & gravitatis habit.* You will consult Vossius de viribus Rythmi, page 74, whose ear, with respect to quantity, was very accurate, though he was entirely unacquainted with the powers of accent, and probably incapable of distinguishing the nice differences of tune, which is no very uncommon case with some of our musicians by profession, who, nevertheless, are good timists.

A TABLE OF METRICAL FEET, referred to at Page 162.			
FIRST CLASS. <i>Consisting of Feet of 2 Syllables.</i>		THIRD CLASS, <i>Feet of 4 Syllables.</i>	
{	Pyrlic - - -	Dæus.	Proceleusmatic - -
	Trochee - - -	Mūsā.	Pæon primus - -
	Spondee - - -	ōmnēs.	Pæon secundus - -
	Iambus - - -	Pīos.	Pæon tertius - -
SECOND CLASS. <i>Feet of 3 Syllables.</i>		Pæon quartus - -	
{	Tribrach - - -	mēiūs.	Epitritos primus - -
	Amphibrach - - -	āmōrē.	Epitritos secundus - -
	Daetyl - - -	cārmīnā.	Epitritos tertius - -
	Anapaest - - -	ānīnōs.	Epitritos quartus - -
	Cretic - - -	māxīmōs.	Ionicus a minore - -
	Bacchic - - -	dōlōrēs.	Ionicus a majore - -
	Hypobacchic - - -	cōncūsā.	Antispastus - -
	Moloss - - -	cōnfīrmāns	Ditrochæus - -
8		Choriambus - -	
		Di iambus - -	
		Dispondeus - -	
		hōmīnībūs.	
		multīvōlūs.	
		cōlōniā.	
		āliēnūs.	
		cēlērītās.	
		āmāvērunt.	
		cāntilēnās.	
		discōrdiām.	
		audīvīstis.	
		Dīōmēdēs.	
		Prēcōniā.	
		āmātōrē.	
		cāntilēnā.	
		nōbilitās.	
		prōpīnquītās	
		Mēcēnātēs.	
		16	

I have added a few EXAMPLES of  
ENGLISH MEASURES.

*Iambic Dimeter.*

Děscēnd | yě Nīne | dēscēnd | ānd sīng

*Trochaic catalectic Dimeter.*

Bȳ thě | strēams thāt | ēvēr | flōw |

*Iambic Dimeter.*

Tō drīve | thě deēr | wīth hoūnd | ānd hōrn |

*Iambic Dimeter brachycatalectic.*

Eārl Pēr | cȳ toōk | hīs wāy |

*Trimeter Iambic brachycatalectic.*

Ā shēp | hērd's bōy | hě sēeks | nō bēt | tēr name |

*Trimeter Iambic brachycatalectic, with  
the first Foot dactylic.*

Fūll mǎnȳ | ā gēm | ōf pūr | ēst rāy | sērēne

*Trochaic Dimeter.*

Tāke thě | blīfs thě | Gōds prō | vīde thēe.

Every language must necessarily have long and short syllables resolvable into the metrical feet: The variety of our numbers is much greater than is commonly supposed, and their effects both upon the ear and the heart are not less striking than those of the Antients; but I would advise you not to oppose scholastic prejudices, in favour of the superior powers and excellencies of the Greek and Roman poetic measures.

It



It hath been said that the Greeks and Romans divided all the syllables of their respective languages into long and short, in the general rules for composition, both in verse and prose, and supposed the short syllable to consist only of *one* measure of time, and the long syllable of *two*; but still those persons who considered the subject with greater accuracy, made a distinction between one long syllable and another long syllable; and again between two short syllables giving more than one measure of time to a short syllable in some situations or circumstances yet less than two, and less than two measures or times to some long syllables yet more than one, and these they called irrational times, not being reduceable to any certain ratio, as they are described by Dionysius, sect. xi. and by the musical authors which have come down to us. Χρόνος ὁ τῷ μὲν βραχέος μακρότερος τῷ δὲ μακροῦ ἐλάσσων ὑπάρχων,

χών, ὁπόσω δὲ ἐσὶν ἐλάσσων, ἢ μείζων, διὰ τὸ, λόγῳ εἶναι δυσαπόδοτον, ἐξ αὐτῆ τῆ συμ-  
 βεβηκότος, ἄλογος ἐκλήθη. Tempus brevi longius, at minus longo quod fit; præ quanto autem fit minus vel majus certâ quippe ratione difficile est redditu ex hōc ipso accidente irrationale vocatur. See Bacchius's Account of Rythmus. One cause of this difference in the length of syllables of the same denomination, which is not indeed assigned by these writers, appears frequently to be owing to the time which is necessarily employed after finishing one syllable, to adapt the organs of speech to begin another, and which must be more or less, as the second begins with a letter of the same, or of a different organ, to that which ended the first; thus if the first syllable of a word closes with *n*, and the next begins with *t*, as in *con-tu-max*, after the voice ends the first syllable *con*, the tongue is ready placed to pronounce the

the *t*, only by letting the air suddenly down from the roof of the mouth where it had confined it; but if instead of the word *contumax* we take the word *confabulor*, after pronouncing the first syllable, *con*, the tongue is to be withdrawn, and the lower lip adapted to the upper teeth before we are prepared to sound the second syllable, and for this reason we must dwell longer upon *con* in the *second* case, than in the first, although in either situation *con* is to be considered as a long syllable: thus again *vul* in *vultis* is not so long as *vul* in *vulpes*, and *vel* in *vellus* not so long as the first syllable of *vultis* or *vulpes*. It is thus in short syllables, *li* in *aliter* is shorter than *li* in *aliquis*, *da* in *pallida*, before two consonants, even in a following word, as *spectra*, is not so short as if the next word had begun with a single consonant, and it would be shorter still,

still, if that single one were a liquid \* : what effects must an attention to the rythmus of a composition have produced among the Greeks, whose genius was equal to the delicacy of their taste, and the diligence of their enquiry into these minutiae of elegance ; for it is to be observed, that the different length of syllables of the same denomination respected rythmus chiefly, and that as verse could subsist, though these irrational times were not regarded, so grammatical accuracy

\* If we attend to the observation above made, we shall find that the difference between a rough, and a smooth flowing style, depends greatly upon the writers neglect of this circumstance, or upon his natural or scientific observance of it ; as the effect of reading, - I mean the delicacy or force of uttering some sentences, depends upon one's giving the little more or the little less to some syllables, not only of tune but of time, than is precisely just : that is, upon those undefineable irrational differences between the exactly true and false measurement of either, after the same manner as we feel it does in a mere musical performance.

was

was sufficient to render a prose composition clear, without any regard being had to the rythmus of it at all ; and, indeed, where too great an attention is paid to it, a writer not unfrequently prefers a worse expression to a better for the sake of sound, and enervates the constitution of his periods by rendering them too delicate ; like those over fond mothers who sacrifice the health of their daughters to the desire of making them fine shapes, *et tametsi bona natura est reddunt curatura Junceas* ; but still a middle way is to be observed, because though perspicuity might be obtained without much regard to rythmus, yet the charm of *grace* and *strength* united *together* would be wanting where it is entirely neglected. *An apt disposition of the parts of any subject, so as to form an agreeable whole, seems to be a pretty good general definition of rythmus* whatever it is applied to ; and in the structure of a period, as the foot consists in a certain num-



ber and arrangement of duly proportioned syllables, so rythmus consists in a certain number and arrangement of duly proportioned feet; and to carry on the metaphor, may be considered as the air and gait both of poetry and prose. Two or three hexameter verses, consisting only of spondees, except their fifth feet, and each foot terminating a word, may be offered as an example of returning metre or verse, which would offend instead of giving us pleasure. Without a proper rythmus, the metre would be just, but the figure of a mummy with its legs closed, and the arms sticking to its sides, would be as agreeable an object to the eye, as this mere *juxtaposition* of metrical feet would be to the ear. Uniformity with variety should be consulted, by uniting the syllables of *separate* words, so as to interweave, or blend them into one metrical foot, as in *mūsā mīhi* the dactylic foot connects the two words, and links them together. A  
 due

due sequence of dactyls and spondees is, perhaps, the least thing that is required in the construction of an elegant heroic verse; and as *variety*, which is one source of beauty, is always most striking when it is supported by *uniformity*, so *uniformity* alone never fails to disgust either the eye or the ear when it is not blended with some portion of variety.

*A duly varied succession of metrical feet, is the proper definition of what is usually called rythmus, with regard to prosaic language as well as verse; but it appears from the more general definition above given, that rythmus, in an extended sense, may be applied to painting, statuary, architecture, gardening, &c. for which we have the authority of the antients, [Arist. Quintil. b. 1.] When the limbs of a statue, the objects in a picture, or the members of a building were duly proportioned and disposed with elegance, they were said to*

have a good rythmus ; and there can be no doubt but that all the fine arts would receive considerable advantage from its being studied as a *general principle* ; though rhetoric, poetry, dancing, and music are its peculiar provinces ; for a compleat idea of it, as applied to language, I would refer you to Dionysius on the structure of language, who makes the *elegance* and force of a period to depend less upon the choice of the words which compose it, than upon their order and arrangement, and compares its power to that of Minerva in the Odysssey, who sometimes gives her heroe the appearance of a poor decrepid old man, and at others heightens the native dignity of his person with all the charms of manly beauty and gracefulness ; after the same manner, a bad rythmus, he observes, gives meanness and deformity to the sentiment itself, whereas a good one raises and ennobles it, and we  
are

are frequently surprized to find the same thought have such a different effect upon the mind, according as the language in which it is conveyed differs merely in this respect.

Upon the whole, the circumstances which constitute the agreeableness of rhythm and verse when brought together, are as follow, In the first place it is requisite there should be a due adjoinment of long and short syllables, in composing the metrical feet. Secondly, a variety in each foot arising from its number of times, compared with the number of syllables of which it consists, due regard being had likewise to what are called the irrational times, whose proportions are not capable of being precisely ascertained,

Thirdly, A variety which arises from the order of sequence, respecting the long and short syllables of those feet in which the number of times are equal, as of the

iambus and the trochee, which have each three times, the first syllable of the iambus containing only one time and its latter two, whereas the first syllable of the trochee contains two times, and the latter only one.

In the fourth place, the adjoinment of accordant feet: which must be done in such a manner as to produce the utmost variety in the mixture of them, consistently with weaker feet being supported by the stronger; and, lastly,

A blending together of the several *parts* of each metrical foot, and uniting them in different words, so as to form them into a whole by a due adjoinment and union, and not merely a bringing the entire feet together, each in a distinct word, like beads upon a string.

I must own it does not appear to me an affair of any great importance, after what manner we *pronounce* a language which  
exists



exists no where at present but in books; as the means only of conveying science, precise accuracy, in this respect, is not absolutely necessary, for as much as the learned of different countries can do without it; we should endeavour, it is true, to observe uniformity of pronunciation, and to violate the quantity of syllables as little as possible, where a knowledge of their quantity can be obtained, which I suppose may be known in general; notwithstanding which, if the antients could be raised from the grave, they would probably be incapable of understanding their own tongues as we speak them at present, for by misplacing either the emphasis or accent, by the raising some syllables too high, or letting the voice sink too low in their utterance, by confounding the emphasis and acute accent together, or by neglecting, in many cases, the due distinction between a long and short syllable,

according to our manner of pronouncing them, or by an error in the powers of some letters \*, we almost entirely alter the whole sound of the words. The ears of the Greeks and Romans were † hard to be

\* The antients, for instance, pronounced the *V* like a *W*, except at the beginning of a word, as *pavo*, the peacock, was called *pawo*, which is expressive of its squall; *j* at the beginning of a word was pronounced not as we utter it in Jacob, but like a *d* and *g* soft, as in some districts the word juice; and as it is by no means clear after what manner they pronounced the vowels *e*, *i*, and *u*, of course the utterance of their diphthongs are less certain and determinate, all which varieties must render our manner unintelligible.

† I was struck the other day with a question from a person unacquainted with any thing more than the sound of the learned languages, *Which of the two, in my opinion, was sweeter to the ear, the Greek or the Latin?* My answer was immediately given, without the least hesitation, as I did not expect a return to it, *That the Greek was said to be, by far, the more agreeable*; but why, replied the questionist, did I rely upon hearsay; why could I not depend upon the determination of my own judgment, in this case? and if the Greek was really the sweeter language, how happened it that

be pleased, and with all these offences against their rules of speaking, we may conclude they would be disgusted as well as uninformed; but when it is given as

that the most predominant sound in it was that of *K*, which could not certainly be reckoned in the number of the most musical letters, and that so many words seemed to be terminated by the letter *N*, but very few with vowels, like the Italian. I was not prepared to give a farther answer; and upon looking into my edition of Hederic's Lexicon, I found (if I am not mistaken) more than sixty pages of it filled with words whose initials were either *K* or *Ξ*, that is *K* or *K S*, or *X* pronounced hard, a vast proportion of disagreeable sounds besides the frequent occurrences of these letters as medials or finals, whilst there was not more than a third part of the number of words beginning with the sweetest of the liquids, *Λ*. And with respect to *N* final preceded by *Νμεγα*, which was objected, I had no apology to make, as I could not but immediately recollect the remarkable frequency of this nasal termination, with the rule *omnis genitivus pluralis definit perpetuo in ων*, upon which I found myself inclined to give a preference, in point of softness, to the Roman language: but this remains a matter yet unsettled in my own mind, and when it is determined, it will be most prudent, perhaps, not to divulge my opinion.

an instance of their extreme delicacy of ear, that an actor would have been hissed, who in repeating a verse should have made the least mistake in the quantity of a single syllable by pronouncing it too short, or by giving it a longer time than was legitimate, we seem to attribute more critical merit to them in general, upon this account, than the fact deserves : for their musical notes being *usually* adapted to the quantity of the syllables to which they were set, (though we learn from Dionysius, of Halicarnassus, sect. xi.\* that they were not always) and the time being beaten upon the stage, they had a standard to refer to, which the dullest ear could

\* In the instance this author has taken from Euripides, in my opinion the musician gave a proof of his judgment and taste in departing from the established accent and quantity, and setting *σῖγα σῖγα λευκὸν* at the same pitch of voice, and as we may *infer* from the expression, to notes of the same length.

not possibly mistake. How, and in what manner they distinguished between a long syllable and a short one in ordinary conversation, where the letters which compose them are the same, is a matter too we are not perhaps sufficiently informed in, but if from the nature of a short *vowel* the following consonant succeeded so quick as to be pronounced with it, the difference would have been as readily perceived by them, as it is in many cases with us : In English in the word consider the *i* is short, and we pronounce it together with the *d*. In the word decisive the first *i* is long, and is therefore separated from the following *s*, de—*ci*—*sive*, and there might be a similar distinction between words of the same construction amongst the Romans, as between pō|pŭlus the poplar, and pŏp|ŭlus the people; but whether this was, or was not the practice, I must leave to the decision of the learned. That the pronun-



pronunciation of the first syllable in each word was different. I have no sort of doubt\*.

I shall conclude what I have to say upon quantity, with observing, that the difficulty, or ease, or elegance of pronunciation is not the sole cause of the relative established length and shortness of syllables, for many words may be imported by a commerce with neighbouring nations, which will retain the original native quantity of their syllables, though

\* You will observe, my dear Charles, that the syllable may be a long one, though its vowel is properly short, for the second syllable in the word consider is long, or otherwise we should pronounce it *consider*, whereas the voice dwells upon it, and it is uttered in the same manner as if the *d* were doubled, and it was written *considder*. A long and a short vowel in the primitive language, which I conceive to have been the Hebrew, have no other difference I believe of pronunciation, than what arises from an adherence to the consonant which succeeds, or a separation from it so as to close the syllable.

not

not exactly agreeable to the rules of quantity with the people where they are introduced, and this long after their original introduction, as foreign words is forgotten. The same thing obtains in words *derived* only from other languages, though altered in some respects agreeably to the genius of that with which they are incorporated: thus P̄yramis was probably an Ægyptian word with a Greek termination, the first syllable of which retained its original long quantity, and many examples of the like kind might, probably, be collected.

It would contribute not a little to facilitate the attainment of our pronunciation to foreigners, and at the same time to render it more uniform amongst ourselves, if characters were placed over the vowels to point out such as adhere in utterance to a following consonant, and to distinguish such as are separated from it, that  
is,

is, to mark the long vowels from the short ones; and in teaching the elements of our language, syllables ought never to be divided inconsistently with the established length of their vowels, according to the customary manner of the best speakers, except when the etymology of a word haply requires it.

I am,

My dear C, &c.

L E T T E R

## L E T T E R   XX.

MY DEAR C.

**T**HE rules of accentuation, and for determining the\* quantity or length of syllables in Greek, are so many, all together, and in most grammars so perplexed, that it will require a considerable portion of your time to obtain a perfect knowledge of them; and the learned are not clear with respect to their application in a number of instances. The laws of the Greek prosody notwithstanding, seem to have been less strictly observed than

\* Limiting the quantity of a syllable to its time only, seems to be an inaccuracy, for the quantity of it consists in a certain portion of tune and time together, whilst we utter it with a given tone and emphasis.

those

those of the Latin; the dialectic differences of their tongues afforded them great latitude, and that almost infinite variety of measures which they invented, was another source of poetic licenses. To be more particular; the elision of one vowel before another, in different words, might or might not be observed at the discretion of the poet; one vowel immediately before another in the same word, did not always determine a syllable to be short; and nothing is more frequent than for a short vowel before two consonants, if these consonants could begin a word, to be used as a short syllable; again, the double vowels  $\eta$  and  $\omega$ , that is to say, ee and oo were often considered as short vowels, in opposition to a rule founded expressly upon the natural powers of speech; and how this was to be reconciled with their grammatical *principle*, that a short vowel was the minimum of utterance, must



must be left to the critics, for if *ομίκρον* necessarily required one time, *ω μεγα*, which was a double *ομίκρον*, must, of course, take up two; and the same may be said of the *η* or the double *ε*. Diphthongs certainly could not be pronounced so quick as single vowels, let the sounds of their respective vowels be blended together ever so intimately, and yet the diphthongs *αι*, *ει*, *οι*, and *υι*, were often used as short vowels. I shall only give one example from Homer and Theocritus, of the ellipse being disregarded, and of an *ω*, and the diphthong *οι*, being used as short vowels.

Ἡμετέρῳ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ ἐν Ἀργεὶ τήλοθι πατρὸς.

Homer.

ἔδ' ἔγνω πρότερον τεθνάκαμες, ἢ ζῶσιν εἰμὲς.

Theocritus.

The judicious Dr. Clark, in his edition of Homer, hath shewn, that most of the

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O

poetic

poetic licenses were limited within certain determinate bounds, and applied under certain circumstances only.

A Thesaurus Græcæ Poeseos hath been published within these few years, after the manner of your Latin Gradus, by a gentleman of very great learning and abilities, to which is prefixed, a chapter on the Quantity of syllables, which from the character of the author, I should suppose to be more perfect, as well as more compendious, than any treatise upon the subject yet written; the book was lent me for a few days only, and I could do no more than look over it in a very cursory manner; it has laid a noble foundation for a more compleat work, and I am amazed one man could do so much; but I have been told by a person who has known him several years, that he is indefatigable. The chapter I speak of, is part of a Dissertation de Re metricâ Græcorum,

corum, comprized in about ten quarto pages of it, including a great number of learned and useful notes. His opinion, concerning accents, is the same with his friend Mr. Foster's, and he apologizes for a general omission of the accentual marks throughout the work, by telling his readers, that as it was compiled for those who have already made a progress in Greek, such persons must know the first general rule of accentuation, that if the last syllable of a word be *long*, the acute accent must be upon the penultimate; and if *short*, upon the antepenultimate, should the word consist of more than two syllables. The foundation of this rule I conjecture to be, that it is easier to let the voice fall, upon a long syllable, than upon a short one, as it feels a sort of repose in dwelling upon it, after being *intended*, and it gives, moreover, a great distinction to the word so accented;

whereas the voice is carried forward almost instantly when it descends upon a short syllable, and would mix its sound with that of the succeeding word, if the short syllable, upon which it falls after *intension*, were the last syllable of the word so acuted, as λόγος ἐμοῦ, and if the following word in such circumstances should happen to be a monosyllable, it would not have any accentual mark over it, but be considered as part of that preceding, as βάλλε μοι το βιβλίον, throw me the book. A similar rest is given to the voice when two short syllables succeed the acuted syllable, for the penultimate is often short together with the ultimate in the same word; but if the penultimate is a long syllable when the last syllables being short throws the acute accent upon the antepenultimate, the utterance of such word is so much more distinct and agreeable, both to the speaker and the hearer.

The

The learned author of the Thesaurus availed himself of this rule to lessen his labour, taking notice only of the exceptions to it, which are much fewer than might be imagined, though sufficiently numerous to occasion you not a little trouble. I may, in a few weeks, find time to send you a short compendium of the rules of accentuation, but shall refer you to the abovementioned dissertation for the rules of Greek quantity. I was informed the other day by a friend of ours, that the author of this extraordinary work, has so absolutely given himself up to his classical studies, as to be an utter stranger to every sort of prudential knowledge; and it may excite a smile at the close of a dull letter, to be told, that whenever this great scholar and man of sense is permitted to walk out for his amusement in London by himself, his wife is obliged to take away his money, or, like a child, he will squander all upon



toys and bawbles, of any sort, to encourage industry; or distribute it amongst the beggars out of charity. The poet's lot, in general, is to have but little money; the lot of this extraordinary genius is to be insensible of its proper use and value.

I am,

Dear Charles, your's, &c.

## LETTER XXI.

MY DEAR C.

AS I have quoted several musical authors from amongst the antients, I am persuaded it will not be disagreeable to you to receive some short account of them, their names not being altogether so well known as those of Homer and Virgil.

The most antient of the Greek musical writers whose treatises have come down to us, is Aristoxenus, who was a disciple of Aristotle about three hundred years before the birth of our Saviour Christ; his three books upon the Elements of Harmonic, are all which remain of his works, and these but in an imperfect state, though

he is supposed to have published several dissertations upon the other branches of Music. He was at the head of a musical sect, which from him was called Aristoxenian. The disciples of this school took in the judgment of the ear, as well as the mathematical doctrine of sounds, in order to determine what was right or wrong with respect to melody, which the Pythagoreans utterly rejected as unworthy of their musical philosophy.

The great geometrician Euclid, a contemporary and scholar of Socrates, is the next musical writer in succession; of whose two treatises, namely, an Introduction to Harmonic, and the Section of the Canon, or Monochord, I intend to give you a plain translation, in a series of letters; though I rather think, as the latter treatise consists of a chain of problems, that I shall inclose it to you uninterrupted and entire.

Gaudentius,

Gaudentius, the philosopher, has written an abridgement of Aristoxenus, which he likewise calls an Introduction to Harmonic. It consists of no more than one book, which concludes with an account of the musical signs, or characters, made use of in four of the Greek modes, namely, the Hyperlydian, the Æolian, and the Hypoæolian modes in the diatonic genus of melody solely. His work, so far as it is perfect, is written with much clearness, and in an agreeable style, but there is no doubt that a considerable part of it has perished. The age in which he lived is very uncertain.

Old Bacchius, as he is called, [Βακχίος Περών] has left us an essay in dialogue upon the Art of Music. It is short, indeed, consisting of a very few pages; but we are particularly indebted to him for the precision with which he has determined the musical intervals of the Græ-  
cian

cian Modes. His works have suffered greatly from the injuries of time, though I suspect them not to be of high antiquity.

Nicomachus is the only writer who has given us an account of the antient Pythagorean system of harmonic, in a treatise he has called a Musical Manual, which was written for the instruction of a lady of quality, and as it appears by her express command ; it consists of no more than two books, but he promises to send her a more perfect performance upon the subject ; to which he considers these two books only as an introduction, if it should please the gods to grant him leisure from the hurry and fatigues of travel, with a tranquillity of mind requisite for such an undertaking. He was an ingenious man, and a good mathematician. The age he lived in, is not known, but it was certainly after that of Claudius Ptolemy,

for



for in the second book he mentions that great genius's reduction of the modes, who flourished in the reign of Antoninus Pius. Nicomachus was a native of Syria, and probably a slave of the lady's for whom he composed his work.

Aristides Quintilian is another of the musical writers, only a part of whose works upon Melody and Rythmus remain. He appears to have been exceedingly ingenious, and his treatise upon Rythmus in particular is so entertaining, that it is to be wished some gentleman of leisure and abilities would favour us with an accurate translation of it ; adding such explanatory notes as may be necessary. For as the Greek music is supposed to have depended principally for its effects upon the powers of rythmus, we should thereby become not only better judges what degree of merit it really possessed, but might possibly improve our own by the study of it.

Aristides

Aristides is supposed to have lived about the time of Trajan.

These are the musical writers to whom I have referred; and, in fact, almost all the other authors of this class have perished in the wreck of time; but as probably these have been preserved on account of their superior degree of merit, there is no great reason for us to lament the loss of the rest.

St. Augustin, one of the most learned fathers of the church, published three books on Rythmus towards the end of the fourth century, part of which I remember some years since to have perused with pleasure, and should like to read over the whole; but St. Augustin's Works are too voluminous and expensive to be purchased for amusement, or the gratification of curiosity only, and this treatise is not to be had separate.

I am, &c.

LETTER

## L E T T E R   XXII.

Hensted, October 1774.

DEAR CHARLES,

**I**T is reasonable to believe there may be but one grand principle in Nature, from whence the particular principles of every art and science are derived ; which must, therefore, necessarily have a considerable degree of connection with each other ; and this was the opinion of both Plato and Tully. Thus the raising of a colour to its utmost brilliance, and withdrawing it again from the eye by such a gradation of tints as renders the variation at any given point imperceptible, resembles the gradual swell and dying away of musical sounds. The analogy between poetry and painting hath been thought so striking, that the interchanged expressions of a mute poem and a speaking picture have been generally allowed. Aristotle considers painting, sculpture, and poetry, as three imitative arts, though in  
my

my opinion without strict propriety, for whatever analogy there may subsist between them, poetry most undoubtedly is something better than an imitative art; nor do sculpture and painting of the superior kind (the historical\* I mean) affect us merely as they are imitations, for all that they with strict propriety can be *truly* said to imitate, are nothing more than form and colour, whilst in every other respect like poetry, they barely raise ideas of the subjects that strike us by some kind of mental *association*; thus the *grief* of Agamemnon, is said to have been *painted*, in the Iphigenia of Timanthes, by the turning away of his face; and even the voice from heaven in the celebrated picture of Poussin, by the attitudes and countenances of the attending figures, but

\* Upon mentioning, some years since, the impropriety of calling this species of painting an imitative art to the painter of one of the best conceived historical modern pictures I have ever seen, (The Return of Regulus to Carthage in his Majesty's collection) I had the satisfaction to find his sentiments corresponded with my own.

passion,

passion, sentiment, and motion, are not imitated or *represented* by painting any more than voice, their ideas only are excited in the mind of a spectator by a cause very different from that of *imitation* or *resemblance*, which are not the final *ends* they aim at, but the *means* by which they are attained; and in viewing of a picture, the subjects of which, in real life, would have but little tendency to delight and warm the imagination, or to touch the passions and affections; the pleasure we should receive from it would be very small, however perfect the imitation of them might be; and although we are formed in such a manner as to be *pleased* with the discernment even of a mere resemblance, for as much as a great part of our knowledge is to be acquired by the act of comparing things together, yet in the noblest species of painting and sculpture in that which affects us by representing human figures in such attitudes, and with features

suited



fuited to the inward dispositions of the soul, in order to correct the heart by moving our affections. In this case, imitation is the last thing we attend to, and if this end the raising sympathetic virtuous emotions is not attained, in some degree, upon the first survey of the piece by an unprejudiced and skilful observer, the artist may conclude, that he hath failed in his attempt, and that a second and a closer survey, will discover in it only the defects of imitation; but where the painter, or the statuary succeeds to the utmost of his wishes, the performance hath already done its business before we reflect at all upon the resemblance \*; which is never till the

\* To be influenced by passion, the mind must be entirely disengaged, and open to receive the impression, without attending to any thing but the stroke of its object: whereas in comparing it must pass from one thing to another, and exercise the judgment which either wards off the blow, or abates the force of it, in *all* cases, especially where fiction or imitation is employed, as in poetry, painting, or statuary.

mind

mind requires to be relieved by a relaxation of the tone of passion with which it was affected. Historical Painting, in short, and the same may be affirmed of sculpture, is only the character of a language, the written language of action; and the artist who is not perfectly acquainted with the principles of this natural language, but only imitates the manner of a Rafael, or a Titian, or a Corregio, is no better than a translator, and his works must necessarily want the spirit of an original author. The *art* it is still said is strictly imitative; but we may justly ask, is the *science* likewise imitative; and why should this term *imitative* be so much insisted upon, which has a tendency to debase it? Imitations, it is true, are the *means*, as the characters in which the language of action is expressed or written upon canvass, but the original language itself belongs to *all* men, for *all* men understand it, and can con-

verse in it without copying one another. In truth, historical painting, as a Science, could not possibly subsist, if Nature had not taught it to all men; and the more we study the expression of particular masters, the more likely we are to corrupt the simplicity of Nature and write unintelligibly, or stiff at best; their works may tell us what to avoid, but good sense will always tell us what action is proper to convey our meaning, independent of the rules, or dictates, or example of those who went before us; and this is a most certain truth, that if the language of action is not evident to a man's own mind, it is impossible that he should ever arrive at any degree of eminence in Designing, from an imitation of the manner of other persons, however excellent.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R

## L E T T E R   XXIII.

MY DEAR C.

Y O U have set me a task to which I have no objection, but that the subject would take up a longer time than I can spare, and requires more learning than I am master of for the discussing it. The enquiry, doubtless, is both curious and interesting, and merits to be treated with precision. One of the antients hath observed, that it is impossible to change the music of the state, without making at the same time a change in its manners ; and as I have always understood the passage, it may be strictly true ; for there is reason to suppose he meant much more by *music*, than simply instrumental melody ; his

idea of it certainly included moral poetry, and probably the whole of their theatrical exhibitions designed for public lessons of instruction. But I must check my pen, lest I should only bewilder you in a maze, through which I can give no clue to guide you, and confine my observations to what, perhaps, I better understand.

The fashion of composing music *principally* with a view to the difficulty of its execution, I should hope is upon the decline; I say that I should hope so, for after fashion has had its run, men must surely feel that those extravagant pieces which surprize, rather than please us, or which please us chiefly by exciting our astonishment, are as far removed from the merit of good composition, as playing feats upon the wire, from the graceful movements of fine dancing. With respect to swiftness of execution in concert, supposing three or four practical musicians



cians in a large band to be capable of playing in exact time, without violating the harmony in such volatile performances, [which, by the way, make as volatile impressions,] it is really shocking to consider what must be the case with those of slower execution, how miserably they are forced to labour on with arms, heads and shoulders, in hunting their companions through the piece, what oblique attitudes and wry-mouth'd energies they exert, to get up with them, and yet after all their writhing and distortions, find themselves at the next *volti subito* thrown out a bar or two behind the foremost of the chase, whom they are to overtake where they can catch them. Now all this may be pleasant enough to those persons who come to *see* the concert, and how the performers can make faces at one another, but is not altogether so entertaining to those whose ears are liable to be hurt by such discordance.

The great misfortune is, that music is looked upon at present by most people, even of sense and learning, as too insignificant an affair to engage a wise man's attention; at best merely as an accomplishment; and a late noble pedantic trifler, in one of his epistles, recommends it to his son, if he had a taste for music, to send for a fiddler to play to him, rather than condescend to practise, even as an amusement, what could not possibly overbalance, it seems, the hazard of introducing him to an unpolite set of acquaintance. In other branches of learning, and even in the acquirement of some mere corporal exercises, this great danger is either lessened, or entirely overlooked, but here it seldom fails of being represented much greater than it is; and if a young gentleman of merit, who could well spare time to cultivate music as a science, by investigating its true principles, and whose station would do credit to

to the profession, should discover an early taste for it, he is frequently deterred from prosecuting the study, by a comparison with some wretched minstrel, whose dirges make night hideous, and who himself is looked upon as the disgrace of the place he lives in; so that the whole business of composing music is *generally* left to a set of men with no better than a mere musical education, either at the play-house, or under some organist of a choir; the latter of whom, if he has a real genius, with a taste formed upon some of our best church music, is too often under the influence of a superannuated prebendary or precentor, who can neither sing nor say, and who considers the organ only as a hindrance to the going on of the service, and retarding the velocity of the prayers.

As the great end and design of music is to moderate and calm the passions, and to interest them in the cause of virtue, a better acquaintance with its principles;

and a more intimate knowledge of our mixed constitution, with the complicated nature of the affections, is required to enable a musician to attain it, than falls to the lot of most men without learning and culture; but the want of a liberal education amongst musicians is to be lamented, not only as it renders their compositions less perfect, they are, upon this account, less capable of explaining their meaning when they attempt to communicate instructions in writing, *most* of our musical writers being very difficult to be understood, by all persons who are unacquainted with the first principles of music, and not always clear to those who have already acquired a practical knowledge of what they undertake to enlarge upon and explain. And as some are incapable of unfolding their conceptions from the meanness of their education, and a poverty of language; there are others of somewhat better information and instruction, who yet  
from

from consciousness of being liable to literary errors, have been deterred from offering their sentiments to the public, by a fear of being ridiculous in their manner of delivering them, which has been a public loss. A diffidence arising from the same apprehensions, had well nigh deprived the world of *The Analysis of Beauty*, the whole scheme of which was settled in the author's own mind, many years before it was committed to writing, and he was urged to it at last by his friend Doctor Hoadly, after having employed an ingenious artist to write *for* him, but found it impossible to communicate his ideas clearly with another man's understanding and language, upon a subject of such difficulty; and music, as a *science*, is acknowledged to be far removed from common apprehension.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R



## LETTER XXIV.

DEAR CHARLES,

I SHALL go on from the conclusion of my last, without much fear of getting beyond my depth.

Musick suffers not only by an exclusion of those who have the advantages of education to improve a natural Taste for it, and to communicate their ideas, *their* exclusion opens the way for pretenders to it to corrupt the judgment and mislead the approbation of the public. There are some amongst our young men of fashion, with whom a vanity of being admired, seems to be the grand motive of their pursuits; and who, without attending to any thing beyond the surface, which they consider as the very cream of science, would

would be thought ignorant of nothing: prompted by this poor ambition of popular applause, and encouraged by a general inattention to the principles of the fine arts, they set up for connoisseurs in them all. Statuary, painting, poetry, gardening, and architecture, suffer by turns under the influence of their skill. Nor can music possibly escape; secure not to be openly contradicted, as their fortunes entitle them to respect, they censure and commend freely, and with much self complacence undertake the direction of our concerts. With these the extravagance of *air* is every thing, and the best compositions, which are ever the most simple, are most likely to be rejected. The few performers of unvitiated taste, who, in general, live by their bounty, are too much interested to oppose their decisions, and should any friend, in pity to the public, endeavour to direct their choice

and

and set them right, he would only be laughed at for his pains, and looked upon as conceited and impertinent; the evil is without remedy; for what reasoning can be applied to make them sensible of their mistakes, in an art to whose principles they are strangers, and who join the sufficiency of a professor with the unskilfulness of a novice.

But supposing these gentlemen to have really acquired some little practical skill in instrumental melody, the case is rarely mended by it; and in general it is made worse, where an affectation of applause was the chief motive of their application; for the same vanity which prompted it, will dispose them to value their little attainments in proportion to the labour of their acquisition, and perhaps to insist upon leading the band, where they are barely qualified to follow in an under part; as if justice required their musical rank,

rank, to be determined by their rank in life; and it is as difficult to fix the stations of these gentlemen at a concert, where there are several competitors for the front desks, as to settle the article of place amongst the ladies at an assembly. To play well with most of these gentry, is to play every thing very quick; which occasions perpetual mistakes in the design of the composer, and often spoils the whole effect of the finest compositions, by an impropriety of manner, and a change of the style. Where true taste and judgement moreover are wanted in a director, what inconsistencies do we frequently hear brought together for the entertainment of an audience! A concert shall begin with the overture in Sampson, and conclude with one of ———'s concertos, without order or design; or the sublimest parts of the Messiah be introduced with the overture to the Maid in the Mill, and  
after

after a distracted solo (with skips from the top of the finger-board to the bottom) upon the double bass, (as being least adapted for swiftness of execution, and except in the hands of a very few masters; is like the galloping of a coach horse,) an unmeaning song in the English Italian taste closeth the first act.

Now this being a term of art taken from the drama, it may possibly in time give the hint of forming our concerts into a *Whole*; whose parts may mutually strengthen and support each other; whereas at present the second hath often no relation to the first; and the third is at variance with them both; altogether a jumble of discordant introductions perhaps, to what never follows, which have little merit in themselves, unconnected with some particular movement of their original subjects, and which lose what each of them would justly be entitled to,

like



like figures injudiciously transferred from one picture to another, by exciting different, and often opposite emotions.

In short, our concerts, as they are very frequently conducted, are not less absurd than a medley of scenes from different Plays, which however excellent in their proper places, would lose most of their beauty by a detached representation, and if taken from the best and the worst authors indifferently, must give us a strange idea of the compilers abilities and skill. This consequence follows; those few occasional attenders upon music, whose natural judgement is too good to be imposed upon, and who are above the vanity of *pretending* to feelings which they have not, are inclined to neglect and to despise an art, that with much parade, and no very trifling expence, affords them so little pleasure; whilst others of good sense, with an overflowing complaisance, contribute

tribute to the debasement of our taste in music, by praising and encouraging such pieces, and such patch-work as establish its corruption.

I am,

My dear C, &c.

LETTER

## L E T T E R XXV.

DEAR CHARLES,

**I**N conversation with an ingenious musician of your neighbourhood, upon the forming our concerts into a whole, he gave it as his opinion, that each act as it is called, might very *properly* be independent of the others, and that no connection between them is requisite. His reason was, that a very little time is abundantly sufficient to produce all the effects a composer or a manager should aim at; after which he conceived the mind must necessarily want to be relieved by an entire change of the subject.

As I make no doubt but this gentleman's feelings are very delicate, he might

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possibly

possibly be hurt by the minds being agitated more than a very short piece of music is capable of doing it, one I mean composed in a masterly manner, and performed agreeably to the composer's intention. But as he professed for the same reasons to be a friend to tragi-comedy, and the introduction of light dances between the acts of our deepest tragedies, I should think there can be little doubt of his differing in opinion and in sentiment from the best and most judicious critics.

Thus far, however, his judgement is certainly well founded, that when the end of a musical composition is once attained, and the mind is greatly affected, as it is unable to sustain a violent degree of agitation long, such pieces should not be carried on much farther; but still the more gradually we ascend to this pitch of emotion, the greater is our delight; and the grand stroke upon the heart should

be

be left to the very last changes of the movement; and perhaps to the last act. In this respect, the poet and the musician have an advantage over the painter, who can select only one incident for the subject of a picture, which must produce its effect at once, without preparing the mind by any foregoing circumstances; whereas poetry and music, by touching the kindred affections as they go along, are at last capable of interesting the whole soul in their design, and by reiterated oblique strokes of raising the principal affection to its utmost height; without attending to this circumstance, music loses a considerable degree of its power, and falls short of the effects it would otherwise have upon the heart.

I am, &c.



## LETTER XXVI.

**Y**OUR apology for instrumental music is just; but however innocent and harmless of itself, my dear Charles, it is often rendered subservient to wickedness and debauchery, by being made the accompaniment of such obscene ribaldry, as would be the scorn even of the vulgar without it; or applied to recommend such light songs as represent sensual pleasures alone worthy of our pursuit; or which ridicule the precepts of religion and virtue, as the waking dreams of doating philosophy, or of splenetic enthusiasm; as if drunkenness and lust wanted some additional incentives, and the welfare and the honour of our country required men to be profligate; as if it were meritorious to sing  
down

down all regard for decency and character; and that liberty without licentiousness was yet in a state of imperfection. This you may be told is exaggerating trifles, but nothing surely is a trifle which tends to the corruption of men's morals; without a sacred regard to moral obligations, no society can subsist, quid leges sine moribus vanæ proficiunt, says the lyric poet; and it is a maxim founded both upon *Reason* and *Experience*, that wherever a government is so constituted as to admit the *people* to a share in the legislation, it must be owing to some very extraordinary accidental circumstances, if it continues long under the same form, when their public virtue is extinct, which cannot long survive after private virtue is corrupted.

The courts of princes have, in general, been pretty much the same perhaps from the beginning of the world, and it is to

be feared will continue so to the end of it, in spite of now and then the example of an Antoninus, an Alfred, or a Czar, unless power and wealth should alter their nature, and cease to corrupt: but when once vice becomes *epidemic*, the passions are outrageous, and the laws which restrain men in the indulgence of their irregular pursuits, no longer are revered but hated; fear, of course, the principle of despotism, must *enforce* an obedience to them, and the principle of a government once changed with the manners of a people, the nature of the government likewise must be changed in conformity to the alteration. It is thus that tyranny naturally arises [according to the established course of Providence,] to chastise a wicked and licentious people; and in like manner as sickness and death, are the natural punishments of intemperance, so the abuse of liberty is naturally punished with the loss of it.

I had:

I had an anecdote of Peter the Great, from a lady in whose family I lived some years, who was frequently an eye witness of the fact, which, I believe, has not been taken notice of by any one of that great man's historians. He constantly used to thrust away the cushion laid for him at chapel to strike his head against, according to the Greek mode of worship, and once added in her hearing, that he knew no difference in that place between himself and the meanest peasant in his empire. How many lessons of piety were comprehended in that single sentence! I should think the influence of such behaviour upon his Russians, must have been as extraordinary as the act itself; and I make no doubt of its having produced effects which continued to operate long after his decease. But there seems to be a certain point of profligacy, at which when a nation is arrived, their iniquity is

so perfectly established, that the good example of a prince loses all its force; nor can any thing persuade men to that virtue which would be both their pleasure and protection. It is impossible to calculate how much vice is indebted for the influence it hath obtained over the populace of this kingdom, to the musical composers of the present age, some of whom appear to have employed a fine taste in this divine art, with as much zeal in the service of the passions, as some of the old masters have done in the service of religion; and as their *Airs*, the accompaniment of immoral song, are frequently attended at the same time with all the favourable circumstances of place, and wine, and darkness, to urge on their effects, and prevent a sense of shame, they operate with full force, and certainly contribute more than is generally imagined to inspire that profligacy and dissipation  
of



of life, and that impatience of restraint which leads to the contempt of all order and government, as well as Virtue, which is evident in the lowest of our common people, (more especially near the capital) who have now, in these respects, risen to a level with their superiors. The theatres in Athens and Rome were an occasion, as it is said, of the debasement of poetry and music, by frittering the antient cadence in compliance with a vicious and effeminate manner of pronunciation, and by introducing mean and unworthy subjects upon the stage, both which had as pernicious an effect upon life and manners.

With the Greeks the stage originally was their school of virtue; public lessons of morality were principally given in theatrical exhibitions, as you will see if ever you should study Æschilus, Euripides, or Sophocles; *all*, perhaps, in *these* authors, is not right; but vicious conduct was not any where defended and apologized; with

as the stage has been a *school of immorality*, and of immorality assisted with the force of poetry and music. In our most decent comedies, the faulty characters in general are represented as most amiable, and the poet seems to satisfy his conscience for making them successful; and rewarding them in the last act, by ascribing an abundance of good humour, politeness, and generosity to them in the indulgence of their vices; whilst the virtuous and religious persons of the drama, are described as sour and splenetic, and, for the most part, as uncharitable formalists or hypocrites; this *may* possibly be nature, but all imitations of nature are not proper to be exhibited upon the stage, and certainly such characters ought not to be contrasted, so as to prejudice the audience in favour of impiety and vicious manners.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R

## LETTER XXVII,

DEAR SIR,

YOU surprized me in saying, that you never heard of the tree called queen Elizabeth's oak, at Huntingfield, in Suffolk, till I mentioned it: as the distance from Aspal is not more than a morning's airing, I wish you and your pupil would ride over to take a view of it. You may at the same time, I believe, have an opportunity of seeing a very fine drawing of this grand object, which was made for Sir Gerard Venneck, by Mr. Hearne. As I measured it with that ingenious artist in a rough way, to settle, in some degree, the proportions of its bulk, it was found to be nearly eleven yards in circumference, at the height of seven feet from the ground;

ground; and if we may conjecture from the condition of other trees of the same sort, in different parts of the kingdom, whose ages are supposed to be pretty well ascertained from some historical circumstances, I am persuaded this cannot be less than five or six hundred years old.

The time of growth in trees is generally said to be proportioned to the duration of their timber afterward; and I have now by me a piece of oak taken from that side of the ruins of Framlingham castle, which undoubtedly was part of the original building in the time of Alfred the Great, if not *much* earlier; which notwithstanding it had been exposed to the sun and rains for a century at least before I cut it out, yet it still smells woody, and appears to be as sound as when the tree was first felled.

The queen's oak at Huntingfield, was situated in a park of the Lord Hunsdon, about two bow-shots from the old mansion

fion

sion house, where queen Elizabeth is said to have been entertained by this nobleman, and to have enjoyed the pleasures of the chase in a kind of rural majesty. The approach to it was by a bridge, over an arm of the river Blythe, and, if I remember right, through three square courts. A gallery was continued the whole length of the building, which opening upon a balcony over the porch, gave an air of grandeur with some variety to the front. The great hall was built round six strait maffy oaks, which originally supported the roof as they grew : upon these the foresters and yeomen of the guard used to hang their nets, cross bows, hunting poles, great saddles, calivers, bills, &c. The roots of them had been long decayed when I visited this romantic dwelling ; and the shafts fawn off at bottom were supported either by irregular logs of wood driven under them, or by masonry. Part of the long gallery where  
the



the queen and her fair attendants used to divert themselves, was converted into an immense cheese chamber, and upon my first looking into it in the dusk of a summer's evening, when a number of these huge circular things were scattered upon the floor, it struck me, that the maids of honour had just slipped off their fardingales to prepare for a general romping.

Elizabeth is reported to have been much pleased with the retirement of this park, which was filled with tall and maffy timbers, and to have been particularly amused and entertained with the solemnity of its walks and bowers; but this oak from which the tradition is, that she shot a buck with her own hand, was her favourite tree; it is still in some degree of vigour, though most of its boughs are broken off, and those which remain are approaching to a total decay, as well as its vast trunk; the principal arm, *now bald with dry antiquity*, shoots up to a great height above  
the

the leafage, and being hollow and truncated at top, with several cracks resembling loop-holes, through which the light shines into its cavity, it gives us an idea of the winding staircase in a lofty gothic turret, which detached from the other ruins of some venerable pile, hangs tottering to its fall, and affects the mind of a beholder after the same manner by its greatness and sublimity.

No traces of the old hall, as it was called, are now remaining; having fallen into an irreparable state of decay, it was taken down a few years since, by the late Sir Joshua Vanneck, Baronet. I have so much of the antiquary in me, as to wish that some memorial of its simple grandeur could have been preserved.

You will be delighted with Sir Joshua's noble plantations of oaks, beeches, and chesnuts, &c. with which he has ornamented the whole country, and which, in half a century, as the soil is particularly favourable

favourable to them, will be an inexhaustible treasure to the public, as well as to his family.

The following lines, written in the reign of James the First, might be applied as a consecration of this seat by queen Elizabeth, without any great impropriety; they are not void of merit, and I shall give you a diffuse kind of imitation of them, for the benefit of your ladies. Allusions to the religious superstitions of Greece and Rome, were as much in fashion amongst the great, upon the revival of *classic* learning, as allusions to the Druidical and Gothic superstitions of our ancestors were before that æra.

I am, Dear SIR,

Your affectionate,

and much obliged friend,

C. D.

P. S.

P. S. The manor and estate of Huntingfield was a grant from the crown to Lord Hunfdon, upon the attainder of Edmund De la Pole, the last Earl of that name, but whether by Elizabeth, or by her father, I am not clear. The Earl of Suffolk was beheaded in the year 1513, the 5th of Henry VIII.

DIANÆ VIRGINI VENATRICI.

Alma foror Phæbi, si te, comitesq; pudicas  
 Casta domus, castæq; juvant pia Jugera silvæ,  
 Exaudi, mitisq; tuos agnosce, nec unquam  
 Hic Dea silvicolis sit fæda licentia Faunis.

Hos tibi sacramus Lucos, hæc surgat honori  
 Arbor opaca tuo, et feros longæva Nepotes  
 Agnosceens, Ferro tandem inviolata recumbat.

Diana virgin goddess, if this seat,  
 The seat of innocence, and these chaste walks  
 Delight thee and thy train, propitious hear  
 A virgin huntress, who implores thy aid  
 To guard these woodland haunts, from the foul deeds  
 Of Faun, or Sylvan. To thy deity  
 She consecrates these groves; and let this oak  
 Upon whose out-stretch'd arms the stock-dove pours

Her melancholy murmur, and beneath  
 Whose bow'ring shade, the wild deer couch at noon  
 To shun the grey-fly, and the gnat, be crown'd  
 The queen of all the forest; nor decay  
 'Till the fair Dryad, by whose plastic power  
 It gradually rose, herself inanimate,  
 Be harden'd into gross and corporal substance;  
 And having peopled wide the rich domain  
 With her tall progeny, subdued by age,  
 When the huge trunk, whose bare and forked arms  
 Pierc'd the mid-sky, now prone shall bud no more,  
 Still let the massy ruin, like the bones  
 Of some majestic Heroe, be preserv'd  
 Unviolated and rever'd——

Whilst the grey father of the vale, at eve  
 Returning from his sweltering summer-task,  
 To tend the new mown grass, or raise the sheaves  
 Along the western slope of yon gay hill,  
 Shall stop to tell his listening sons, how far  
 She stretch'd around her thick-leaf'd pond'rous boughs,  
 And measure out the space they shadow'd——

May a long race of virtuous heirs succeed  
 Lords of the soil, to beautify these scenes;  
 But chief to glad the heart of industry,  
 And feel the blessing sevenfold return'd,  
 In plenteous harvests and domestic peace.



## LETTER XXVIII.

Onehouse, June 26, 1784.

DEAR SIR,

AS you were entertained with the Latin verses I sent you some time since, I shall take the liberty of sending you another specimen, by the same author, which I would have you compare with that celebrated passage of Virgil in the second Georgic,

O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona norint,  
Agricolas, &c.

of which, if it was *not* intended as an imitation, yet the resemblance appears to me very striking, and there are few modern verses, perhaps, that will bear to be placed by the side of Virgil's with less disadvantage. As I made an application of

the former to the oak at Huntingfield, I shall apply these to the spot, where it has pleased the divine Providence to place me; and the spirit of the author would forgive it, could he know with how much propriety they are adapted to this situation, in which, I hope, to close the evening of my life.

I am,

Dear S I R,

Your affectionate friend,

C. D.

#### ÆDES SOLITARIÆ.

Non istic aurata domus, Luxuq; fluentes  
 Deliciæ, spondæve sopor pretiosus eburnâ,  
 Aut in carbaseo tyrius velamine murex;  
 Non gemmâ vibrante nitor; non persona cantu  
 Limina; nec prono famulantum examina collo;  
 Sed nemora alta virent, Quercusq; orniq; minaces  
 In cœlum, tremulæq; alni prope fluminis undam  
 Fronde placent variâ, fructus paritèrq; salubres,

Arbusta,

Arbusta, et lentæ coryli, et Pomaria læta  
 Sufficiunt Epulis; tum floribus alma renidens  
 Terra, tegit valles, et Prata recentia rivis.

Quam benè nocturnos canit hic Philomela dolores,  
 Quam benè dum roseos, nox ultima pallet ad ignes,  
 Innumeras dans lucus aves, jam picta salutat  
 Turba diem, clarisq; sonant concentibus auræ!

Hic neque crudeles Diræ, tristive flagello  
 Sævit Cura ferox, falso non abditus ore  
 Ipse sua insanus furit in præcordia Livor.

Arma procul, scelerisq; minæ, populiq; tumultus,  
 Blanda Quies, parvisq; habitat Concordia tectis  
 Semper; et innocui risus, sociiq; lepores  
 Demulcent curas, & somnia grata remittunt.

Quin mens ipsa suæ stirpis memor; ardua cœli  
 Surgit humo meditans, & novit in astra reverti.

## O N E H O U S E.

No gilded roofs here strain the gazer's eye;  
 No goblets flow with noxious luxury;  
*Sleep*, balmy *Sleep* here rests his downy wings,  
 Nor waits the purple pomp of gorgeous coverings:  
 No gems here dazzle the offended sight;  
 No trilling airs inspire unchaste delight;  
 No servile bands with crouching necks appear,  
 Not *Flatt'ry*'s self can find admission here.

But lofty groves of beauteous forms are seen,  
 The *builder oak* \*, the *fir* for ever green ;  
 The tow'ring *ash*, whose clustering tops receive  
 The rising sun, and deck the ruddy eye :

The

\* The Manor of Onehouse, in the reign of Edward the Third, was in the possession of Bartholomew Lord Burwash, [one of the twelve noblemen to whose care the Prince of Wales was committed at the battle of Cressy] with grant of free warren for all his demesne lands in Suffolk. A farm house hath been built in the site of the old hall, where he probably resided, which was encompassed with a mote, upon whose eastern bank an oak is now growing, and apparently round, the circumference of which, at the smallest part of the bole, is sixteen feet, and twenty-four at the height of three yards from the ground. Notwithstanding one of its principal leading arms, with several other massy boughs on the north side have been broken off by tempests, it contains at present upwards of four hundred and ninety feet of solid timber by measurement, in its stem and branches. About sixty yards to the southward of this venerable tree, is a broad-leaved elm, whose boughs in the year 1731, extended fifty four feet towards the north, and near forty upon its opposite side, measuring each way from the center of the trunk.

The greater part of this parish, two centuries ago, was a wood, except a narrow strip declining to the south east near this large distinguished mansion, which was beautifully situated

The *alder* brown, that loves the watry vales,  
 The *asp* light-quiv'ring to the summer gales,  
 The *willow* pendent o'er the mazy stream,  
 The *poplar* huge, the *elm's* extended beam

ated upon a rising ground, gently sloping into a valley, with a rivulet winding through it. In the base court, on the outside of the moat towards the east, which is a square of half an acre, now the milking yard of the farm house, there were growing in the year 1776, as many ash trees as contained upwards of a thousand and three hundred solid feet of timber.

This estate with the manor and advowson of the living, are now in the possession of Mrs. Douglass Pettiward, of Putney, in the county of Surrey. The church, which is small, and has a baptistery, or font, of unhewn stone; seems to have been a Saxon building, but a part of the north wall only, extending about ten yards from the tower, which is circular, is all that remains of the original structure. It is situated two hundred yards to the north of the moat that surrounded the old mansion house, whose grandeur and solitary situation probably gave name to the parish. Not less than a fifth portion of its lands at present consists of woods and groves finely planted with timbers, and even a part of the rectorial glebe adjoining to the parsonage house is a wood of ten or twelve acres.



Their different colours here display, and vie  
In all the tints of varied harmony.

Nor less the shrubs their wholesome fruits afford,  
And blooming orchards still supply the board :  
Earth spreads her charms, with flow'rs the meads are crown'd,  
And smiling Ceres pours her gifts around.

How sweetly does the love-lorn nightingale  
To nights dun shades repeat her mournful tale ?  
And when the rosy morn appears in view,  
The painted tribes their chearful notes renew ;  
From every copse they fly, on every spray,  
Swell their gay throats, and hail the rising day.

No sordid views deprive the soul of rest ;  
No Passions *here*, disturb the labouring breast ;  
Save Grief, that sickens at another's woe,  
And bids the melting sorrows *sweetly* flow.

Far from the madding people's furious strife,  
Far from the anxious cares of busy life,  
Beneath this straw-thatch'd roof, this humble cell,  
Calm Peace, and Friendship pure, delight to dwell,  
And when retired to rest, soft dreams employ  
Their slumb'ring thoughts, and tune the *soul* to joy,  
Which rapt in bliss, through airy regions flies,  
Quits the dull earth, and claims her native skies.

## L E T T E R   XXIX.

DEAR CHARLES,

**A**LTHOUGH it has been always my opinion, which I have given you at large in conversation, if not in former letters, that instrumental music by itself, is capable of exciting only indeterminate emotions in the mind; yet if any person notwithstanding should assert, that the same degrees of tension, or that a certain manner of vibration in the nerves which invariably accompanies the indulgence of any passion, may be excited by a corresponding series of musical notes, and thus determine such emotions, either morally or immorally, to particular objects, he would not want *authority* from some of  
the

the Greek writers to support him. That a similitude of vibrations in the nerves, or whatever kind of movement it is, which affects them, hath power to call up similar ideas in the imagination, carries with it a degree of probability, from numberless effects, which almost every person at one time or another of his life may have experienced, just as a lateral blow, or pressure upon the ball of the eye for instance, seldom fails to produce a sensation which resembles the glare of a flash of lightning.

If all sensations whatever are owing to pressures, impulses, or strokes, upon the nerves, or to some certain vibrations of their internal constituent parts approaching nearer to, and alternately receding to a greater distance from each other, acting thus upon the finer parts of the brain by the operation of external objects; it is not unlikely, that whatever feelings or ideas  
such

such vibratory motions may excite in the sensory, will be present to the mind so long as those vibrations shall be continued, or their impressions shall remain, even though the objects which originally caused them be removed: it is thus the ground seems to heave under us, when we first come on shore after a voyage; and that woods and hills appear to move and glide away from the sight, after fixing our eyes a considerable time upon running water: but if similar vibrations in the nerves caused by mere instrumental music, are capable of exciting even a *tendency* only, to virtuous or to vicious indulgences, Plato doubtless spoke wisely as a legislator, in proposing its subjection to the state; though he certainly is to be understood of melody and poetry conjointly, (and I believe he somewhere says as much) when he affirmed it to be impracticable to change the music of a nation,

tion,

tion, without making, at the same time, a change in its manners, and, of course, a change of its laws \*. But I have said enough upon this subject before.

As you well know, my dear Charles, by what slight connections my mind is liable to be drawn away from the subject of a conversation, or the subject of a letter, starting aside, as our Mr. N. says, like a broken bow; you will not be surprized if I should pass from that of music to that of dreams. Now these have been imputed to the same cause as the musical emotions above mentioned, and it hath been thought as clear as moon-light, that our sleeping ideas usually take their cast from the thoughts or actions of the preceding day; that it is owing to the con-

\* There were certain odes or sonnets set to music amongst the antients called νόμοι, but I am of opinion, these were not intended here by Plato, but laws which were *actually* coercive of the manners of a people.



tinuance of some impressed motions upon the nervous system, that good men still enjoy the exercise of virtue in their slumbers, and the lascivious the indulgence of their lust; whilst thieves and robbers share imaginary booties, or anticipate their punishment at least in dread and agonies of mind, if they really do *not* experience some degree of corporal sufferance. I shall quote a passage from Claudian, which is particularly to this purpose, and I think you will not be displeased with the length of it; but the poets, in general, have excelled upon the subject of dreams, and there would be no end of quotations from them.

*Omnia quæ sensu volvuntur vota diurno*

*Tempore, nocturno reddit amica quies.*

*Venator defessa toro dum membra reponit,*

*Mens tamen ad sylvas & sua lustra redit.*

*Judicibus Lites: Aurigæ somnia, currus;*

*Vanaq; nocturnis meta cavetur equis;*

*Gaudet*

Gaudet amans furto, permutat navita merces :

Et vigil elapſas quærit avarus opes :

Blandaꝑ; largitur fruſtra ſitientibus ægris,

Irriguus gelido pocula fonte Sopor.

Me quoꝑ; muſarum ſtudioſum ſub nocte ſilenti

Artibus innuſmeris ſollicitare ſolet.

Lucretius, in his fourth book, hath applied the circumſtance of a repetition during ſleep of our waking ideas, as ariſing from a continuance of impreſſions made upon the bodily organs, to his *mechanical* ſolution of dreaming, and the ſupport of the impious abſurd doctrines of Epicurus, in which he hath been followed by ſome modern advocates for the opinions of Spinoſa. It may not be improper, therefore, to obſerve to you, that although a readineſs and facility of moving in a particular way, is an effect of uſe and habit, which holds not only in reſpect to our ſpontaneous motions, but to thoſe of mere mechanifm, (as all muſical inſtruments  
improve

improve by use,) yet that whenever any consistent train of actions is presented a second time as a vision to the mind in sleep, by a series of nervous vibrations similar to what were originally impressed by *real* objects, these repeated secondary motions of the nerves, [notwithstanding their acquired aptitude to vibrate after an accustomed manner] seem to require no less as *regular*, or rather as *intelligent* a cause to re-excite them, as when we were awake; for the accidental tones of the nerves at our beginning to dream, could only present one unvaried scene to us, as the disease called the incubus, the *night-mare*, or *night-goblin*, for example, in some measure accounts for the apprehension of a great weight being laid upon our breast, so long as the suffocation lasts; and though it should be granted that the tensions of the nerves are perpetually altering, or that they are continually receiving

ceiving different pulses and vibrations, from a change of the air, the motion of the arteries, or from any other *involuntary* causes; yet that such casual alterations could no more produce a regular train of consistent ideal actions, however phantastic, than the accidental variation of motion in a stream of air, could produce a regular piece of music upon the æolian harp, or repeat a concerto of Handel upon Mr. Parry's immediately after that incomparable artist had been performing it. In order to account for this wonderful phenomenon of dreaming, some ingenious scholars have supposed, there may be somewhat in ideas analogous to the power of attraction in material substances, and that when a single idea is excited in the mind, it necessarily calls up, or attracts, as they would express it, a second, so that thus a train of images during sleep may be excited without any choice

choice or direction of the Will, consisting only of such ideas as are linked together by the strongest connections; but you will recollect, my dear Charles, that a chain of images, or ideas, is not all that is required to constitute a regular scheme of action, and is a very incompetent solution of the most common appearances that occur to the soul in sleep, in which art and design are not less manifest than in an historical painting, or a dramatic performance; and I could almost as readily admit Ovid's account of dreams in his cave of sleep for a philosophical solution of the ideal scenery, as these attractions; for supposing such attractions really to exist, and that a repetition of some *images* might be accounted for by them, yet the poet is by far more rational than these philosophers, in as much as he attributes such apparent trains of connected and consistent actions to voluntary agents



only. Even Phantafos transforms himself into stocks and stones, into ground or water, by an act of his will; but for Morpheus,

—Non illo jussos solertius alter  
 Exprimit *incessus*, *vultumq;* *modumq;* *loquendi;*  
 Adjiciens *vestes*, & *consuetissima* cuiq;  
*Verba* : sed hic solos homines imitatur; at alter  
 Fit *fera*, fit *volucris*, fit longo corpore *serpens*.  
 Hunc Icelon Superi, mortale Phobetora vulgus  
 Nominat : est etiam diversæ tertius *artis*,  
*Phantafos*, ille in humum, Saxumq; undemq; trabemq;  
 Quæq; vacant anima feliciter omnia transit.

How poetically beautiful are these lines, and how precisely just! In fact, I have often wondered at the preservation of character, in my sleeping reveries, with regard to sentiment, voice, gesture, dress, and many other habitudes of the persons introduced to our imagination in dreams, which I have perfectly recollected immediately upon waking,

waking, or sometimes long afterward, and I can truly say, that the consistency of manners and behaviour, &c. of these ideal persons has been far beyond my best abilities to imitate at any time, with my utmost stretch of thought ; and to attribute such *effects* to accidental variations of the pulse, or to any other mechanic causes, seems to me not less absurd, than to suppose a number of unconnected words jumbled together in a box could of themselves produce a regular comedy ; and moreover, that this is done as often as these connected regular scenes occur to us, when we are in other respects as insensible as what we sleep upon, requires the credulity of an atheist to believe.

I am, &c.

## L E T T E R    X X X .

MY DEAR C.

**T**HERE is something so astonishing in the phenomena of dreams, and at the same time so amusing, that I shall continue the subject, and take the liberty of being as unconnected as I please, though I would by no means recommend it to you to imitate my example; if you chance to nod however, you have an apology at hand.

Shakespeare, above all men, seems to have been most intimately acquainted with the workings of Nature; Clarence's dream in Richard the Third, which he relates to Brackenbury the night before his murder, cannot be read without shuddering;

ing ; and the horrors of Macbeth and his lady, both sleeping and waking, after the murder of Duncan and Banquo, strike the imagination more forcibly than any thing the antients have left us upon the subject.

What we call the association of ideas, may possibly depend upon a repetition of similar impressed motions upon the nerves; and it may be the capacity of their being thus affected, which gives to immaterial spirits that great power they have over us ; a *power* by which we are told they can influence our minds in visions, or taking advantage of an indisposition of our organs of perception, even whilst we are awake, are capable of disturbing the imagination, and of disquieting us even to madness. This seems evidently to have been the condition of some amongst the dæmoniacs in the gospel, notwithstanding what the learned Mede hath urged against

the opinion, and particularly the case of Saul in the sixteenth chapter of the first book of Samuel, who appears from the text to have been troubled with an evil spirit as a punishment from God, and that the melody of the harp by restoring a proper tone to his nerves, or affecting the arterial pulsations so as to give an easy circulation to the vital fluids, relieved him in the paroxysms of his disorder, and delivered him from the effects of dæmoniacal frenzy: indeed by what other means than an influence upon the bodily organs, if instrumental melody alone is here intended, (which, perhaps, was not the case) can music be supposed to have had any power in the restraint of such an agent; but the relation of Saul's manner of recovery seems to point out the nature of the disorder with which he was afflicted, and subjected to be thus disturbed, perhaps, by supernatural horrors, besides  
the



the breaking loose of all his fullen, envious, and malignant passions : for we are told, it came to pass when the evil spirit by God's permission was upon him, that David took a harp and played with his hand, and Saul's breath [rua'h] returned and he was well, and the evil spirit departed from him. An incapacity of breathing freely, is one of the symptoms of almost every species of fits, and no words could more naturally describe a person's coming out of one, than these, which tell us that *his breath returned, and he was well*; that is, he was restored first to the use of his senses, and next to that of his reason, upon which the evil spirit departed from him. Should it be objected, that this is an arbitrary method of interpretation, which gives two different senses of the word rua'h in the same verse, perhaps it may be sufficient to say, that rua'h, when applied to man, means

in general, the breath of his nostrils, as it usually must be taken in a metaphorical sense when joined with the epithet evil, and this whether in the same sentence or not. But supposing it to mean, in the above passage, that Saul's spirit or life returned to him, it still implies that there was a temporary suspension of his mental powers, or a deliquium, which is commonly brought on either in epileptic, or hysterical disorders by a suffocation, and is succeeded upon recovery by a violent heaving and panting for breath.

This very natural interpretation of the word rua'h, is, in some measure, confirmed by the circumstance of Saul's asking, who David was, after the slaughter of the Philistines, [for he certainly could not want any information concerning David's family, to which some critics have confined the question] this enquiry I say evidently shows, that if the king was not  
entirely

entirely senseless during the paroxysms of his distemper, whatever it was, yet he did not recollect his attendants at such seasons : and this failure of his memory alone is at least a presumptive evidence of a bodily distemper, which prepared his mind for the judicial influences of an evil spirit upon it, now the *Spirit of God* had forsaken him, and that this distemper (the cure of which is attributed to the power of music) was probably epileptic.

I am,

Dear Charles, your's, &c.

P. S. There is still a difficulty remaining, which hangs heavy upon this interpretation, namely, that if David was made Saul's Armour-bearer before this period, it seems strange, that Abner, who commanded

manded the army, should have been so unacquainted with him as not to have been able to give the king any account of the stripling, as Saul called him when he was going against the champion of the Philistines : in answer to which I have to observe, that it may be doubted whether the words *Nesa Chelim*, which are translated *Armour-bearer* in the preceding chapter, ought not to have been differently rendered : *Chelim* signifies *utensils* or *vessels of any kind*, and in many passages of the sacred writings *musical instruments*, as well as *armour*, so that as it appears to me, David was hitherto distinguished with the title of the king's chief musician, his Harp-bearer, or Conductor of the musical instruments only ; an office, of which Abner might have no very high opinion : and as Saul's forgetfulness would probably be catching, whatever was the cause of it, Abner might not be *disposed* to remember  
an

an obscure youth in the character of a minstrel, and a person too who had no place in the affections of his master : add to this, that the general circumstances of the history seem rather to require this translation ; David's musical talents, from the choice made of him on account of Saul's distemper, were acknowledged to be extraordinary, and his prowess which might have recommended him to the office of Armour-bearer, was, probably, in general unknown at this time, as it had been hitherto confined to the wilderness.



## LETTER XXXI.

To the Rev. C. S.

DEAR SIR,

WHAT Mr. H. observed upon poetry and poets the day you left us, did not escape me; and though I made no answer to it at the instant, I shall hazard a few observations now I have thought a little upon the subject. In my opinion, we are too much disposed to take our ideas of poetry from the critics by profession, rather than from the observation of what passes in our minds, in which there is a standard we may refer to, the Principle, I mean, from whence the rules of criticism are supposed to have been drawn.

*Art*

*Art* never arrives at its summit of excellence but by degrees, and, in general, rises very slowly ; whereas in many cases, *Nature* starts into perfection at once. The inexperience of early ages prompting men to admiration and astonishment, every thing must have appeared extraordinary to them, and being exaggerated at the same time through the mistiness of doubts and apprehensions, Fear, beyond the other passions prone to gratify *itself*, (though every passion leans to its peculiar weakness of indulgence) thus naturally became a source of the sublimest imagery. *Correct* and *beautiful* poems, therefore, are the product of a polite age, and of a refined state of manners ; whereas strength and grandeur have their origin in rude unpolished times, and at the dawn of civilization. The earliest poetry must of consequence be the most striking, written when the passions and affections operated in their  
utmost

utmost force without reserve, and *images* multiplied by the paucity of words gave a beauty and strength to language, and adapted it to sentiment by what must always be superior to all artificial rules; (which are liable to be misapplied,) the instantaneous dictates of men's genuine natural feelings; for however we may admire the metaphors or the similies, &c. in such original poetical compositions, as being agreeable to the established *rules* of criticism, they are but accidental natural beauties which laid a foundation for those rules, instead of being deduced from them; as in a grand and elegant structure, the columns, the architrave, or the dome, though its chief ornaments, have their original in *necessity* and usefulness.

When arts and languages improved, those periods, which were observed to produce the most agreeable effects, became standards of a fixed rythmus; and a repetition

titution of them was called *verse*, from their  
 returning measures ; for which, if I had  
 an inclination to appear very learned, I  
 could overpower you with quotations from  
 Dionysius, Quintilian, and Aristotle's po-  
 etics, &c. but with leave of these great  
 writers be it spoken, however exquisitely  
 the ear may be delighted with an agree-  
 able rythmus or measure continually re-  
 turning in a *short* poem only, it must be  
 disgusted with harmony itself, by too fre-  
 quent a repetition of the same cadence ;  
 nor is this the only fault of an invariably  
 returning measure ; as of the hexameter  
 for instance in the learned languages, or  
 of the heroic in our own. One and the  
 same species of verse cannot be adapted  
 with propriety, to every subject, and to  
 every passion indifferently, nor even to  
 express the several modifications of the  
 same passion or affection with precision ;  
 so that a repetition of the same measure in  
 perpetual

perpetual succession, [which we are apt to confound with poetry] without any other change, than what arises from varying the different pauses, or the metrical emphasis and accent, besides blunting the organs of hearing by the fatigue which such a uniformity of motion and impulse of necessity impresses upon them, must frequently produce a discordance between the sentiment and the rhythmus; not possible to be avoided in a long performance, how exquisite soever the versification (which is a different thing from the poetry) may be; but if this could certainly be prevented, and it were as certain that the interest we had in the subject itself, would hinder any *violent* disgust from taking place; yet to go on chanting the same measures from morn to noon, and from noon to night, is not consistent with men's natural dispositions, with that love of *variety* which is implanted in us; and it

is



is evident in this case, as upon enquiry it will be found in every other, that Art, beyond a certain boundary and limit, falls short of Nature's genuine excellence, that her most striking simple beauties may be overloaded with ornaments, and the elegance of her steps, and her dignity of movement, be rendered disgusting by an affectation of a being always graceful.

In order to preserve the same fixed returning measure, or verse properly so called, words of a determined quantity respecting their syllables, are to be hunted up; and it often happens, that those words which would most naturally express the sentiment, have too many or too few for the *Metre*, some words, therefore, must be left out, or others put in; some must be taken from their natural situation, and others intruded into their place, which may have very little meaning, if any, annexed to them; whilst those are

to be entirely rejected, upon which the force of the effect, in a great degree, or, perhaps, principally, depends; in short, the expression is, in general, rendered so unnatural either by crowding the thoughts into fewer words than are necessary, or by loading a sentiment with so many, that some of them are merely expletives; or by transposing the order of them after such a manner as to render it obscure, [for which the gradus-men, and rhyme-jinglers have a general apology,] that what we *commonly* called verse, is so far removed from every thing *natural*, as not unfrequently to fatigue the ear instead of giving it delight, whilst at the same time it tends to darken and obscure the sentiments designed to be conveyed by it, and the poetic measures and language in every country are always more difficult to be understood than prose, even by the natives of it. A distinction is to be made

made here between the truly beautiful figurative expressions and movements of Nature, as they flow from the affection and the heart, (the chief, though not the *only* circumstance from which their beauty is derived,) and those chains of poetic metre, which are a restraint upon the invention, as well as language, and resemble only a kind of dancing in gyves. The measures of Pindar's odes which remain to us, have never been determined with certainty; and I am inclined to think he perpetually varied them in his dithyrambics precisely conformable to the sentiment to be conveyed, which was certainly a more difficult task than writing in any one uniform returning measure whatever, as well as more expressively elegant. This seems to be the proper explanation of Horace's expression, *numerusq; fertur Lege solutus*; nor have I the least doubt in my own mind that it was the source of those high encomiums which this poet receiv-

ed from his contemporaries, and the ancients in general, particularly from the great Roman Lyrist, whose judgement is of more weight with me than that of all the rest; he was most undoubtedly a competent judge without prejudices in Pindar's favour; and his own odes, in point of merit, are certainly next to those of this first and most sublime of lyric poets, as he is generally called. In *my* humble opinion they are by far superior to those which remain of Pindar's, for his dithyrambics are entirely lost, which are supposed, and most probably with justice, to have been the sublimest of his works.

I am,

Dear S I R,

Your affectionate friend,

C. D.

## LETTER XXXII.

DEAR CHARLES,

**I** SUSPECT my letter upon quantity not to be so accurately written as it might have been ; though I am clear it does not contain any thing, but what, if taken in its proper sense, is perfectly consistent with the established principles of Greek and Roman prosody. There is a quotation from Dionysius of Halicarnassus, towards the conclusion of it, upon which I wish I had enlarged, to obviate mistakes ; it is brought in opposition to an opinion commonly entertained, that the Greek musicians *always* made a point of adopting their notes to the quantity of the syllables to which they were set. This



might, indeed, *sometimes* be the case; but it was not *usually* done, as I presumed it to have been: upon turning to Dionysius and reconsidering the whole passage, of which I quoted only a small part, it set me right in this error, which I had entertained in common with persons of infinitely better judgment, and fifty times more learning than I ever pretended to.

The modulation of our voice in elocution and in song differ widely with respect to the manner of effecting their purposes upon the hearer; a rise and fall in it, in each respective scale of notes, as mentioned in my xivth Letter, is necessary both in common speech, and singing; but an intension or elevation of tone may often do that in one case, which is brought about by a remission or lowering of it in the other; and I do not know that any principle has been settled for the conducting of modulation in either; we *feel*  
every

every transgression of this principle notwithstanding, without knowing what it is; even the vulgar, as Dionysius says, who constitute a considerable portion of every audience, are sensible of the violation of true harmony and rythmus, for which men have *universally* a natural taste, as connected with the affections, which shows itself in the disapprobation of what is *wrong*, if it does not always point out what is *right*; and I am fully persuaded that an audience of English clowns would generally find fault in the right place, though they might be over bountiful in their applauses, to which simple ignorance and admiration are liable in all countries. Aristides Quintilian hath shown what distinction subsists between notes in common speech, in the recitation of poetic numbers, and in the melody of song, but hath not proceeded to the laying down a principle for their application.

In the passage cited by Dionysius from a tragedy of Euripides, he doth not *blame* the musician for violating accents, in his application of musical notes, (which hath been imagined by some very learned men) but he gives it as an instance only of the difference between the notes of *song* and the notes of *language* in our ordinary conversation, which are determined by the accentual marks; and he shews likewise that the notes of song as applicable to poetic measures might differ in respect of their times from what is usually denominated quantity. So that it appears clear to me beyond a doubt, the antient Greek musicians took the same liberty as the moderns, to compose their music with a very slight regard to the metrical length or accentual height of the syllables. In truth, according to this author, they made no scruple of violating accent and quantity either in song or recitative, as they thought proper, not capriciously

capriciously and wantonly indeed, but whenever they felt it would be most proper to give expression to the sentiment; and, in fact, how could a musician, who is worthy of the name, do otherwise? I heartily wish our friend Mr. S. would consider the principle of melody with respect to *Sentiment*, as he has already done with respect to *Harmony*, and oblige the world with his thoughts on each branch of the subject. I am persuaded, that if any person could establish the matter clearly *he* could; and I do not know that it has ever yet been attempted. But to return to Dionysius. The example he has taken to show the difference between accentual notes in ordinary utterance, and those of song, is from a scene in *Orestes*, where *Electra* requests the Chorus to retire in silence softly from the couch, (upon which he is introduced as slumbering,) lest they should awaken him again to his distraction.

distraction. In my edition, which is not the best, Electra's words are given to the Chorus, the reason of which I suppose to have been, because the same request had been made just before in a speech given to Electra; if therefore what is quoted by Dionysius be not Electra's speech, it must be a repetition of her request by the leader of the band, for the address is evidently directed to the chorus, whose *habit* is pointed out by the distinction of their white slippers, if my memory does not deceive me.

Ηλ :- Σῖγα, Σῖγα, λευκον ἵχνος αρβύλης  
 Τιθεῖτε, μὴ κῦπῆτε,  
 Ἀπὸ πρόβατ' ἐκῆς, ἀπόπροθι κόιτας.

Dionysius tells us, that every syllable of the three first words of this passage was sung at the same pitch of voice; ἐφ' ἑνὸς φθόγγου μελωδεῖται, notwithstanding each word



word must have had both its acute and its grave accent. The circumflex alone implied both an acute and a grave accentuation of voice upon the first syllable of *σίγα*; or if the first syllable of *σίγα* be supposed to have had an acute accentual mark, and not a circumflex, as I think it hath in some authors, still the voice ought to have been lowered by the rules of accent upon the short syllable which immediately follows. *Φόγγος* meant originally, I believe, the sound of a string, and signifies a *Note* at any height in the scale of music. *Ἀρβύλης*, he tells us, which having an acute accent upon the second syllable, required the pitch of voice to have been remitted in the pronunciation of its third, had the same elevated note assigned to the ultimate and penultimate, in direct opposition to an established principle of accentuation, that no single word can have two syllables acuted, or uttered in elevation.

Again,

Again, the first syllable of *τιθεῖτε* sung in recitative to a grave tone, (and by accident only agreeably to the laws of accentuation) had both its succeeding syllables set to elevated notes in the musical scale, and to notes too of the same length, as may be inferred from the expression; though I rather am of opinion we ought to read *ὁμόχρονοι* for *ὁμόφωνοι*. The circumflex upon the diphthong *ει* in *κλυθεῖτε* was sunk by the musician, and two notes at the same height affixed to the second and third syllables, for *τάσις*, the word used by Dionysius, signifies properly extension as applied to a string of the lyre to sound a given note, *μιᾷ τάσει*, therefore, must be understood at the same pitch of acuteness or elevation. With respect to *αποπρόβατε*, notwithstanding the middle syllable *πρό*, as being acuted, was properly the most elevated syllable of the five in common utterance, the highest note of the melody was

was not assigned to this, but to the penultimate.

Thus far it is clear from the examples here alledged, that the antient musicians, as hath been observed, made no scruple of offending against accents; and it follows that quantity of course must have been often violated together with them; but Dionysius does not leave this matter to our inference. The same thing he *positively* says happens to Numbers, for whereas the simple and prosaic style never violates the times either of nouns or verbs, but preserves the syllables long or short as we receive them from the *voice of Nature*, ὥσας παρέιληφε τῇ Φύσει τὰς συλλαβὰς τὰς τε μακρὰς καὶ τὰς βραχέϊας, τοιάυτας φυλάττει, the sciences of Music and Rhythmus on the contrary so transforms them by an increase and diminution of their times, that each very often passes into its opposite, long syllables being made short,

and

and short syllables considered as long ;  
 and this he speaks of, as a legitimate privilege of melody and rythmus, and does not impute it as a fault to the musician. Once more ; I cannot help wishing that the principle of musical expression was clearly investigated, as it is distinguished from the principle of elocution.

I am,

Dear Charles, your's, &c.

LETTER

## LETTER XXXIII.

DEAR CHARLES,

I HAVE been not a little surprized by the assertion of a late anonymous writer, that many reasons may be deduced from Herodotus, Strabo, Plato, and other antient authors, for suspecting that the Iliad and Odyssëe are only Celtic or Etruscan poems, translated into Greek; that neither of them was originally written in the Greek language, admits likewise, as he affirms, an *internal* proof, forasmuch as they have not *only* an abundant mixture of Celtic words, but that they evidently bear the stamp of *Celtic manners*, such as *never* were established in Greece, at any period of its history: how far this  
last



last remark may be true, I do not pretend to be capable of judging, but if well founded, it gives a considerable weight to his opinion. One thing always struck me, long before I read this author, namely, a discordance between the progress of the Arts, the highly polished language of the Iliad and Odyssæy, and the coarseness of manners in these poems. This was an evidence which I could not doubt, that Homer [whose name in Celtic signifies the minstrel or the man of verse] probably received considerable assistance at least, from some heroic songs of his predecessors in poetry, who had flourished perhaps many centuries before him; and that he blended the state of the Arts as they were advanced in his own time, with the facts as *they* had recorded them, which he took for the subject of his own unequalled poems. He introduces Achilles repeating these songs to his Lyre, when  
the

the ambassadors from Agamemnon came to his tent, and the most *learned* critic \* of the age hath observed, that whenever Homer invokes the Muses, he should only be considered as appealing to the songs of these more antient bards, to authenticate the facts he was about to deliver.

I do not recollect that ever they have been considered in this light; but I must own, the following lines of Horace appear to me as alluding to these very poems, and lamenting the loss of them,

Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona

Multi, sed omnes illachrymabiles

Urgentur, ignotiq; longa

Nocte, carent quia vate sacro.

HOR. Carm. l. iv. Ode ix.

for carent in the *present* tense does not necessarily imply that their deeds were always unsung, but only that the poems

\* The author of the Divine Legation of Moses.

celebrating their exploits were not remaining in the Augustan age.

There is a strange tradition, that the Iliad was not intended by its author for a whole or compleat poem; an absurdity not worthy of an answer; but the origin of it may be accounted for, in the opinion of Homer's having availed himself of these heroic songs of his predecessors, which were probably separate pieces, preserved only by memory.

Since the perusal of this book I have reflected with more attention upon the subject than I used to do, and am fully persuaded that epic poetry must have had an earlier original than the Iliad and Odysssey, for I can never bring myself to believe that poems so *artificial* in their structure, and at the same time so *perfect* as never to have been equalled by any other in any age of the world since, could possibly be the *first* essays of their kind. The Hetruscans were a flourishing  
people

people long before the supposed age of the building of Rome, and that Arts were advanced to a high degree of perfection amongst them, we have some authentic memorials ; but we have strong presumptions of the *Celtic Druidical Bards* being still more antient. There is reason to believe that the Celts were a distinguished people, as early as the patriarchal times, when civilization and the arts were flourishing in Ægypt ; and that there were poets by profession amongst them, is a fact in which all historians are agreed, so that many centuries may be allowed for the progression of epic poetry, from the æra of this people to that of the immortal blind bard who did not live till after the death of Solomon. Helene, the daughter of Musæus, is said to have written a poem upon the Trojan war ; and Syagrus, mentioned by Ælian as the next poet after Orpheus and Musæus, exercised his muse upon the same subject, though their works

are not come down to us; and possibly Homer's may be improvements upon these. That the religion of the Celts (which is a presumption of their very high antiquity,) was received from the Israelites before the doctrine of the Redemption of mankind by the sacrifice of a Mediator was corrupted amongst the Gentiles, is clear, in my opinion, from some of their religious ceremonies; the principal of which consisted in a veneration paid to the mistletoe of the oak, which, as it is commonly understood, has the appearance of a most ridiculous and unaccountable superstition; whereas upon the supposition of their having been instructed in the patriarchal doctrine of the Messiah, revealed in a particular manner to Abraham, from whose immediate descendants it is most likely they received it, every thing is clear, and agreeable to antient usage. There are several passages in the scriptures which intimate the oak to  
have



have had some typical relation to Divine worship ; it was planted in the proseuchas not only of the later Jews, but before the days of Joshua the son of Nun, and its name in the radical letters of the Hebrew signifies the Deity himself. The reverence therefore of the Druidical priests for the plant springing from the oak, which they cut off with great solemnity, and offered upon their altars, might be owing to its being considered as a natural emblem of that sacred *Branch*, as the Messiah in after ages was styled by the prophets, who was to take upon him a different nature than that from which he proceeded, and to become an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of the world. And the medicinal virtues ascribed to this plant, (which it is supposed even to this day to be possessed of) in the cure of epileptic disorders imputed to the influence of malignant dæmons, were probably derived from the same source, a tradition of the

sacred Branch \* being sent for a *healing of the nations*, and to counteract the power of evil spirits.

I suspect you will think that I have been more than ordinarily dull in the detail of this conjecture, and that what I have advanced upon the authority of a nameless writer concerning the Iliad and the Odyssey, is extremely whimsical, if not altogether absurd. I shall not undertake to defend his opinions; they may afford you ten minutes amusement, and some little, as you see, may be said for them.

I am, &c.

\* Isai. iv. 2. In that day shall the *Branch* of the Lord be beautiful.

Zech. iii. 8. Behold I will bring forth my servant the *Branch*.

Zech. vi. 12. Behold the man whose name is the *Branch*.

L E T T E R

## L E T T E R    X X X I V .

M Y   D E A R   C .

**I** PROMISED that I would take an opportunity of enquiring fully into the principles of the Græcian music, as they have been delivered to us by their own harmonic writers; but I cannot think of sitting down to so difficult a task without the assistance of Mr. S. who is at present engaged. You will therefore excuse me if I only just touch upon the subject now, in order to explain a passage in St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians, which I apprehend is not generally understood; I am sure it was not construed properly when we went over it. You know that the difference of acuteness and

gravity, between any two notes in music, is called an interval, and that in modern music, the notes immediately succeeding each other in the common or Guidonian scale, are at no greater distance or interval than that of a tone, which is usually divided into ten parts called commas; nor at a smaller than that of a hemitone, consisting of five commas, [though both the tone and hemitone, if I rightly recollect, are demonstrated to be alternately a greater and a less, from some very minute differences between them.] Thus from the note C to that of D is the interval of a tone; from D to E is another tone; from E to F is a hemitone; from F to G is a tone; from G to A is a tone; from A to B is a tone, and from B to C the eighth note, which closes *in* the septem discrimina vocum of the poet, is again at a second hemitonic interval; so that the octave may be said to consist of two tetrachords,

chords, each of which includes the interval of one natural hemitone. It was a fashion with the Greeks, to begin the tetrachord with an hemitonic interval, as E F G A for instance, and whatever was the pitch of E, the second note, F, was tuned at the distance of a hemitone from it, and the intervals between B C D E were similar to those between E F G A.

When the strings of the lyre were thus tuned, the music was said to be in the diatonic genus. In a second species of music, which they chose to denominate chromatic, not only the second string of each tetrachord was tuned at the interval of a hemitone from the first, but the third was likewise tuned at a hemitonic interval from the second, and to make up the proper number of hemitones in a tetrachord, [namely five] the fourth string was tuned at an interval of three hemitones from the third. As art and absurdity



furdity prevailed, they established, and pretended to be delighted with a third division of a tetrachord : the second and third strings of the lyre, were now tuned at the interval only of a diesis, or a quarter tone, and the fourth at the interval of a ditone from the third, that is, of four hemitones, in order to compleat the proper interval of a fourth, which consists, as hath been observed, of five.

Unnatural as these *latter divisions particularly* were, the Greeks are said to have valued themselves much upon the invention, and from use and habit to have *acquired* a taste for this preposterous melody, which could be agreeable to no ears but their own ; for no other person could feel or understand it. It is upon this account the Apostle says, *ἢτε αὐλός, ἢτε κιθάρα εἰδὲν διασολὴν τοῖς φθόγγοις μὴ δῶ, πῶς γνωθῆσεται τὸ αὐλόμενον ἢ το κιθαριζόμενον* : where *διασολή* precisely answers to the *διασήμα*,  
or

or *interval* of the Greek musical writers, and the whole passage corresponds with what is meant by Bacchius, who after determining a tone in the system of musical notes to equal the difference or interval between a fourth and a fifth, adds, τέττε γὰρ μὴ ὑπαρχόντος αδύνατον εἶη τι τῶν τάτα Μεσικὴν δεῖξαι. That διαστολὴν τοῖς φθόγγοις means well known intervals, or the established differences of acuteness and gravity in a scale of notes, which were sensibly felt, (without which one man's music could have no effect upon another man's affections) and not a difference merely in the hastening or the drawling out of a musical composition, is evident from considering the folly which St. Paul here intended to reprove; now this was not the pouring out a hasty torrent of confused words, like some of our modern enthusiasts, with a chorus of sighs and groans for the burthen. But the making  
use

use of a language with which the hearers were unacquainted, and which must have been either an abuse of *real* inspiration, or the pretence to it only out of vanity ; in short, it was the preaching in an unknown language, which whatever doctrines it contained, could be intelligible only to the speaker himself. Were I to come to you, saith the Apostle, and deliver my instructions in morality and religion ever so elegantly in a variety of tongues to which you are strangers, what would it profit you ? Take the case of instrumental music, in the science of which you Græcians particularly boast yourselves, and suppose a musician modulating upon the lyre or the flute in a new genus of harmonic, whose intervals are absolutely unknown to you, what pleasure or advantage could you receive from an attention to his melody ? Whatever merit it might have with those to whom its intervals

were

were familiar, it must certainly be a disagreeable and unintelligible jargon of wild sounds to you who are ignorant of them.

Whether the Apostle understood the absurdity of the Græcian refinements in music or not, his applying to their supposed *taste* in it shows his judgment and address; and in this light the allusion is just, which upon the usual supposition of its relating only to the hurrying over a piece of music in the performance, is exceedingly defective, and involves an absurdity in the illustration, because however properly or improperly executed, no musical composition can be performed in any manner, nor exist indeed without having an established distinction of intervals which is meant by διαστολὴν τοῖς φθόγγοις; to suppose it possible, is to imagine that music can exist without musical notes.

How

How the Greeks could fall into the absurdity of regulating their melody *wholly* upon mathematical principles, and of giving up entirely the natural judgement of their ears, which was the case with the Pythagorean musical sect, is wonderful, though I am not surprized after they had so done, at an endeavour to support the credit of their understanding, by a pretence of extraordinary powers, particularly in this last genus of melody, which they named the *Enharmonic*, and concerning which the gravest authors of antiquity have related wonders : wonders that have gained credit in opposition to common sense, and which I could as soon believe if they were attributed to the music of the spheres. It affords us an example, my dear C. that with the generality of the world, as hath been observed of the Sibylline verses by somebody, the most ridiculous opinions want only a little temporary



porary support from a few leading men to their establishment, for when once they are become antient, all farther proofs are deemed unnecessary, and even to doubt about them is thought an unpardonable insolence,

*Si dubites cuncti clament periisse pudorem.*

I am,

My dear Charles, your's, &c.

P. S. There were some few of the antients themselves who acknowledged the difficulty of reconciling the ear to the unnatural melody of the enharmonic genus. Aristoxenus, who was at the head of a musical sect in opposition to the Pythagorean, has the following expression, speaking of enharmonic, τρίτον δὲ καὶ ἀνώτατον

ἀνώτατον τὸ ἑναρμόνιον, τελευταίῳ γὰρ αὐτῷ  
μόλις μετὰ πολλῆ πόνου συνεθίζεται ἡ αἴσθησις.

The Diatonic, he tells us, was the first and original melody, which had its origin in our natural feelings. He seems to reckon the Chromatic as a laboured effort of Art, in opposition to Nature; but that the senses *hardly* and with great difficulty could, even from long use and habit, endure the intervals of the third.

## LETTER XXXV.

MY DEAR C.

**Y**OU herewith receive what was the result of an evening's conversation with our ingenious friend Mr. C. S. It was written down the next morning in a rough way, and very little was added to it afterward, though much has been since struck out. You will therefore consider it only as a fragment; but imperfect as it is, I have frequently referred to the traces of it in my memory with advantage; and have hunted it up, now after several years have passed, to send you a transcript; as thinking it may be of use in the course of your studies, and save you some unnecessary trouble in attempting to

carry on enquiries beyond a first Principle, which I have known some ingenious men perplex themselves in doing, not distinguishing where they ought to stop; of which I might give a notable instance in the disputes concerning personal identity, which is simply ascertained by Consciousness, not constituted by it; a consciousness of personal identity presupposes, and therefore cannot constitute it, any more than knowledge in other cases constitutes the Truths which were antecedent to it, and its objects.

I am, &c.

OF

OF PRINCIPLE IN GENERAL, AND  
OF ITS SUBSTITUTES.

*A Fragment.*

PRINCIPLE, I believe, is defined by Dr. Watts in his Logic, to be a first Rule\*. I should rather choose to say, that *Principle is a standard to which we refer all our Ideas, Thoughts, or Actions.*

If the *Relation* between any of these, and the *Principle* to which we refer them, be found true, such *Thoughts* or *Actions*, &c. are pronounced to follow from, or to

\* The difference between a Rule and a Principle I take to be this, that a Rule is a deduction from a Principle, applicable to some particular cases only, and seldom holds without exceptions even in these, whereas a Principle extends to all cases. The generality of the world, it is true, look no higher, and to such every Rule is an imperfect Principle.



be *Consequences* of, that *Principle* from which they have been deduced, after a reference or application to it.

*Truth* then is a quality, inherent in the relation between *Principle* and *Consequence*; and the power of discerning *where truth*, whatever it may relate to, exists, may be called Judgment; or *Judgment* is that Power by which we discern and distinguish *Truth*, whatever Principles and consequences are connected by it, in their several respective Relations.

Notwithstanding that there is undoubtedly in Nature, but one single *Principle*, yet with respect to *human* Understanding and Application, there may be several kinds of it, but that only is *real Principle* which is at the Head of *All Consequences*.

A Matter of *Fact* may have consequences flowing from it, with respect to which, it partakes of the Nature of *Principle*, and may therefore be called *subordinate*

*dinate Principle*; at the same time *this* subordinate *Principle* may be a consequence of some higher subordinate Principle, as this last of some one still higher, and thus up to the *first Principle* from which *all* consequences flow.

When by the Power of our Judgment we have deduced a *Consequence* which flows from our discernment of *Truth* existing in the relation between a *Principle*, an effect, or an idea, the Mind hath a Power of treasuring up this *Consequence* in the memory; and *consequences* thus laid up for occasional use, which we acquire a habit of recalling by artificial associations, as well as natural ones, without deducing them from their Principles afresh, may be termed *Habitual Knowledge*.

There are but *few Propositions* so evident, as that we can by immediate intuition discover the Truth of their respective relations; what few there are, may

be ranked under the title of *intuitive Knowledge*; and *this* species of Knowledge, together with the *habitual* Knowledge before mentioned, constitute human Knowledge in general; we see then what are

Principle,

Consequence,

Truth,

Judgment, and

Knowledge.

*Principle* is the *Standard* referred to. *Consequence* whatever may *truly* be deduced; or which follows from a Principle, to which, ideas, thoughts, effects, or actions are referred. *Truth* is that link which connects Principle and Consequence. *Judgment* is the Power of discerning *where Truth* exists. And *Knowledge* is the retrospect of consequences treasured up for Use and Application, which have already been deduced from Principles, together with the discernment of such truths

truths as are clear by an immediate intuition only.

From hence we may be enabled to decide a question of importance, namely, to determine which is the best method of communicating knowledge, the *analytic*, or the *synthetic* method.

Now all knowledge being at first discoverable only by analysis, that is, being obliged to analyse effects, in order to trace them upwards to some kind of Principles, the mind becomes prejudiced in favour of this method, and is disposed to think it *that*, by which Knowledge likewise should be conveyed; whereas the clearest and the readiest method of *communicating* knowledge, must be by a contrary procedure; or by what is usually called the synthetic method. For from the nature of *Principle*; and from what is said on *Judgment*, it follows, that when a principle is given, we have a power of determining whether

the Relation between that *principle*, and any supposed consequence be true or otherwise; and from what hath been said on *Knowledge*, it follows, that in proportion as the Principle referred to rises towards the nature of *true principle*, that is, approaches nearer to the first *Principle*, its advancement must give us a more extensive prospect, and that we have the power of acquiring more knowledge as a greater number of consequences are related to it, and diverge from it.

There is what may be called a first *Principle* in every Science, as there is a first *Principle* of all Science, and when a *Principle* is given, we have a fixed standard to which we may refer *propositions*, and effects; in proportion therefore as this Principle approaches towards the first Principle, we are enabled by that Power of Mind denominated *Judgment*, to discover a greater number of *true Relations*,  
and



and to acquire the *knowledge* of more *Consequences*. Such *Principles* compared to the multitude of their consequences, are doubtless very few; and it must be a matter of long *time*, and much *difficulty*, *analytically to investigate them*; the great advantage therefore to be expected from one who *professes* to instruct, is to have those *Principles*, as *sources* of knowledge, pointed out at once: A Disciple then has only to trace the channels into which they branch in their descent, and without the trouble of an analysis, may know the nature of the several streams by the fountains which they flow from.

A Tutor who should insist upon his pupils treading in his steps, and proceeding to investigate all *Principles* by analysis, acts much like one who having gained the summit of a mountain, with the utmost difficulty, should direct another to attempt it, by the same steep and  
broken

broken precipices he ascended it himself; it hath been accordingly observed, that the *generality* of those persons who engage at first in a pursuit of Science by the method of analysis, rarely ever arrive at any extraordinary degree of eminence in it; worn out with the fatigue of so laborious an undertaking, they usually content themselves, after a short time, to lay in Consequences only, instead of Principles, merely as a fund of materials for Amusement, without ever thinking or reasoning, or judging at all about them; and the furniture of their minds much resembles the furniture of the two sages packs at Lagado; for though the bearers may sometimes with propriety be said to be loaded with Learning, as it lies in a confused and unconnected bundle, they are little more concerned with it than a Porter is with his burthen: and it is pleasant enough to see these men, proud of the  
high

high notion they suppose the world hath entertained of the abundant knowledge they have heaped together, stooping under a weight of useless lumber, and drudging on, like misers, very contentedly to their graves in the acquisition of more. I call it useless, because not having any criterion by which to judge of propositions and effects, whenever they are unable to produce the Authority of other People's Judgment, for the support of their opinions, instead of refering them to Principles ; *if*, haply, they attempt to reason for themselves, they are absolutely lost, and should they venture notwithstanding to proceed, they go on like the generality of mere polemical Divines, still beating down each other, incapable of distinguishing Friends from Enemies, and mistaking Enemies from Friends ; till by means of a watch-word they form themselves into an impenetrable Phalanx, that

is

is usually Proof against conviction, and then declare open war against all who dare to write or *think* in a different manner from the body. It would be easy to descant upon many other inconveniences which must arise from communicating knowledge analytically: the foregoing hints are sufficient, and may be enlarged upon at pleasure. I shall now enquire into the difference between

TASTE, GENIUS, WIT, AND  
HUMOUR.

Besides the *Truth* of relation between principle and consequence, there is an *Elegance* of Relation likewise; and it is the peculiar province of what is called *Taste* to discover *this* relation, and to determine, in several things, which are equally approved of by the Judgment, where the superiority of elegance exists:

A *just*

A *just* or a *true Taste* must therefore include Judgment; for it is a *false* or a *fantastic Taste* that approves of any thing which does not bear a *true* relation to its *Principle*, *vitiato sicuti palato, res ut sunt, non ita sapiunt*. *Genius* includes *true Taste*, as *true Taste* includes Judgment; and *Genius* is superior to *Taste*, in that power of mind by which it discerns a variety of remote, as well as immediate consequences, at one view; whereas *Taste* and *Judgment* determine in general concerning those things *only*, which are actually brought before them, and *it is* this superior ability of *Genius* in the discovering a multiplicity of consequences at once, which is what we mean by that extraordinary Power of Mind called *Invention*.

*Wit*, in the opinion of Mr. Lock, consists in an unexpected assemblage of such ideas, and in putting them together with quickness,



quickness, wherein any resemblances can be found, which may excite agreeable visions in the Imagination or Fancy; now to this, an immediate discernment of such resemblances, by which agreeable pictures are composed to delight the imagination, is a necessary power of the mind, and it may appear, from what hath been here laid down, that *Wit* may be the product of *defective Genius* including *defective Judgment*; for as *true Genius* discovers real consequences connected by *true relations*, so *Wit* discovers consequences which are principally connected only by *likeness*; once in a century, perhaps, a prodigy of *Genius* may arise, whose powers of mind are capable of discerning not only real consequences connected by *Truth*, but to resemblances likewise, and of attending to both without confusion; *Wit* and *Judgment* therefore are not absolutely incompatible; they rarely meet,

it

it is true, in their utmost perfection in the same person, but when they do, it must be owing to accidental circumstances, if such a one does not govern the opinions of the World.

*Real Genius*, as including *Judgment* and *Taste*, must be delighted with *Beauty* and *Truth*, and consequently must be a friend to *Virtue*, which is the acting suitably to *both* these relations; but if this is the case it will be objected, that men of *Genius* would always be the most regular and exemplary surely in their behaviour, and never deviate from the paths of moral *Virtue* and *Religion*; whereas we often find those who seem to be possessed of it, the most irregular in their conduct, virtuous and vicious by turns, as different circumstances occur: The truth is, a *perfect Genius* is never to be found; and in those who possess many of the peculiar marks of *Genius*, that active principle

principle of mind which is the most distinguishing characteristic of it, occasions a rapidity of thought and action, which frequently hurries them into the excesses even of vice itself, though designed by Providence to be the guardians of truth, and illustrious examples of a virtuous conduct; but it ought to be observed, that in giving way to vice of any kind, the man of Genius always acts against his *strongest conviction*, and feels a feverity of anguish whenever he reflects upon his misconduct; whereas Wit alone, though it sometimes takes the lead, is indifferent to Virtue or to Vice, and delighting in what may be called mere imaginary picturesque consequences, inclines by its natural bias towards falshood, hath a tendency to mislead the mind of its owner, and to corrupt the understanding by a habit of discovering and dwelling upon such partial or fantastical agreements,

ments, as are inconsistent with a search after truth, and frequently from habit even with the *discernment* of it. Wit, therefore, is not without a considerable mixture of folly, and however opposite to each other Wit and Folly may appear, they run together, and unite as intimately as lead and quicksilver.

*Humour* consists in an *apparent* absurdity of speech or action, in deducing false consequences from real *Principles*, or true consequences from *false* ones (knowing them respectively to be such) with all the formality of right reasoning, and propriety of behaviour. I say it consists in an *apparent* absurdity of speech or action; for if the incongruity is unknown to the person who makes use of it, we do not reckon him a man of Humour, but of quite another class; and if it passes undiscovered by others, it ceases to be humour to *them* likewise. Humour

is generally reckoned the lowest species of *Wit*; for as *Wit* forms new and beautiful pictures, so *Humour* forms new and ridiculous ones; but though both wit and humour be indifferent to truth, *Humour* is, in this respect, *superior* to *Wit*, that the Possessor's own understanding is not so liable to be imposed on by it, at least not immediately. We may from hence discern the error of our making ridicule the test of truth, since absurdity of one kind or another is the source of it; and however Ridicule may be deemed a test of elegance, the truth of a relation is determined otherwise than by the contemplation of improprieties.

With regard to the reality of knowledge all men are equal \*; the difference  
between

\* It might have been observed here, that the prejudices in favour of mathematical proofs, are not so justly founded as we might expect from the encomiums bestowed upon it; indeed some people argue as if there was no other certainty  
whatever;



between the wisest of men and of others respecting only the extent of it, and that is much more limited than our vanity disposes us to believe; indeed the only knowledge we are capable of, which deserves the name of wisdom (*upon the supposed possession of which men are apt to pride themselves*) and which is always stiled Wisdom in the sacred scriptures, is the knowledge of our duty, arising from our knowledge of the relation in which we stand to God, and our fellow-creatures; that is, the knowledge of morality and religion, which influences our conduct; the principles of this Science are clear, and offer themselves readily to the mind; whereas the principles of every

whatever; the steps, it must be owned, by which we advance, are more easily distinguished in mathematical enquiries which respect only lines and numbers, but in *all* advances towards truth, by reasoning we must necessarily proceed from one step of *intuitive* knowledge to another of the same kind.

other kind of Knowledge, which hath not an immediate relation to this, are more subordinate in their nature, must be fought out with diligence and labour, and our utmost endeavours will not carry us far, before we find the bar put to all farther enquiries.

The foregoing observations may lead us to several matters of importance.

There is a severity in Truth which never fails to extend its influence over the whole mind of the person who gives up his attention to it; and hence we may observe the man of mere judgment to be always possessed of a rigidity and severity, which, for want of considering its cause, we are apt, at first sight, to mistake for an Original ill-nature and moroseness of temper. In the man of Taste, this severity is qualified by that discernment of elegance, which inspires a natural kind of politeness accompanying his

his judgment, and which is the foundation at the same time of that placid calm disposition, which the men, possessed of this happy faculty, are blessed with : But the man of Genius has every advantage that the human mind is capable of ; he not only discerns truth and elegance of relation in subjects which are offered to him, but sees, at one view, an almost infinite number of consequences flowing from a Principle, together with their relative degrees of beauty compared together ; and this flashing, as it were, of consequences upon the mind in their full splendor, and, with the swiftness of lightning, hurries him out of himself, and occasions a rapidity, which is apt to extend itself to every thought and action of a true genius. Wit, as being the product of *defective* genius, including *defective* judgment, must beget a temper of mind *similar* to that which characterizes the man

of real genius ; and as this latter has always a rapidity about him, attended with a becoming confidence, so the former, likewise, will be lively, agreeable, and unreserved.

The man of wit is not so rapid as the man of genius, because he discovers but few consequences at once, neither is he so phlegmatic as the man of solid judgment, because he seldom troubles himself to examine the *truth* of any relation whatsoever.

As the natural powers of men's minds may contribute to form their dispositions and tempers, so their dispositions and tempers are, in general, very evidently characteristic of the faculties of their minds, and furnish us with farther hints which may be of use in common life.

Is it necessary for me to persuade, or to confute? My first endeavour should be, to find out what is the peculiar disposition,  
and

and what are the powers of mind, of the person with whom I am concerned, and being able to read the latter in his temper, I must urge my topics, and conduct my arguments accordingly. In vain would any one attempt to prevail upon a man of wit by demonstrative arguments, such a one would soon be tired with that, of which his mind is incapable of discerning the force.

What has been said may be applied to education. It is no difficult matter, by an attention to the actions and behaviour of children, to discover their natural turn and abilities; and from the hints here given, we may be enabled to strengthen their powers, or to correct the excesses which arise from too ample an indulgence of their original bent, which must of necessity contract the mind, as the method here pointed out is proper to open it.

Suppose, for instance, we observe in a



child an original turn to rigid Judgment, it would be in vain to think that the powers of invention can naturally flourish in so cold a soil ; but, nevertheless, this mind may be *improved*, by pointing out the elegance of relations at the same time with the truth of them ; and by this means, although Taste is not a native of the spot, it may be planted in it by art, and cultivated to a high degree of excellence. But if, on the other hand, there appears a lively invention, which principally characterizes genius, and of course I should expect to find Judgment and Taste in some degree ; yet, as the mind delights in action, there is great danger of this invention running wild, to the neglect of Judgment and Taste ; and, therefore, in this case, great care ought to be taken to inculcate an attention to them, without hurting the Invention, or hindering its energy : and it is undoubtedly  
often

often owing to a neglect of this kind, in the usual method of education, that this rapidity of mind in men of Genius hurries them into vice, in opposition to the intention of Providence.

It only remains, to show by what method we may proceed to find out the *reality* of a Principle, and by what means we may prevent our mistaking an imaginary for a real one; the test of consequence is established from the *Truth* of its relation to a Principle, it remains to find out a criterion of Principle, and to do this, we must, as in the discovery of all knowledge, proceed to a proof by the method of analysis.

There is frequently such a relation discernable between several consequences, as plainly indicates them to belong to *one and the same Principle*; the point is to discover what that Principle is; now it may so happen, that when one of these consequences is referred for examination

nation to a Principle, there may, at first sight, be such an appearance of true relation between them, that it shall, upon a cursory view, pass for a just consequence from it, but if, upon referring another of these connected consequences to the same principle, we should find the relation between this second apparent *consequence* and the *Principle* to be false, we may conclude, from the certain known relation between the two, which was observed at first, and which may be called their indicative relation, that the principle upon which we imagined these consequences to depend, is not their real principle, and we must, therefore, look out for some other: it is thus we are furnished with a method of putting a *Principle*, as it were, to the test; for if it will not hold good in respect to *all* those consequences which have a true indicative relation to *each other*, it is, undoubtedly, not their real principle.

When

When we are engaged in the discovery of Truth, we frequently make use of this indicative relation, in order to prove that the analysis is just, even without observing that we do so.

This may, at first sight, perhaps, appear to be the synthetic method of investigation, because there is a principle given, but it is to be observed, that several consequences are here applied to a seeming *Principle* only, to try whether it is a Principle or not, which can be found out only by analysing these consequences, and tracing them up to their original: Let us try to illustrate this method of procedure:

In digging amongst the ruins of Her-  
culaneum, the workmen discover two  
arms of parian marble, at no great dis-  
tance from each other, which evidently  
belong to the same statue, each of them  
having the remains of some musical in-  
strument

strument joined with it, the fragments of which instrument fit each other exactly, and are a true indicative relation between the two arms; upon applying *one* of these arms to an antique trunk, thrown out near the same place, it is found to adapt itself to it with so much ease, that we are prejudiced in the opinion of its being the body of the very statue from whence both the arms were broken off, but, upon application of the other arm, it appears clearly to be a mistake, the direction of this arm being inconsistent with the attitude of the trunk, as it must join the body before it ought to do it, or reach up beyond its proper insertion.

The same indicative relation [the application of which is here intended to be illustrated] will be of great use likewise in the synthetic method; for when we are descending from a known principle to  
consequence,



consequence, we may, sometimes, be deceived by a specious appearance of some proposition, or effect, and mistake it for a real consequence of this principle, but upon observing, afterwards, that this consequence hath a certain *indicative* relation to some other consequence, whose Principle we know to be different, the mistake appears plain ; and thus, as in analysis, the indicative relation is a test of *Principle* ; so, in the synthetic method or the true order of teaching, it becomes a proof of the just relation of *Consequence*.

C. D. C. S.

1764.

LETTER

## LETTER XXXVI.

DEAR CHARLES,

I HAVE mentioned it as a striking absurdity of our concerts, that they are not formed into a *Whole*; and that such compositions are frequently forced into union in them, as have not only no natural connection, but are inconsistent and at variance with each other; and I cannot but think, that there are just objections likewise to a Concert which consists of Instrumental Music only; for although its several Parts should be selected from the works of a real Genius, (which may not perpetually be the case, as such are not extremely numerous, whatever musical concordance they may possess, and  
however

however they may please the ear) they have much less power over the affections and the heart to restrain and regulate the Passions, than we might otherwise obtain, which, doubtless, ought to be proposed, as the great and ultimate end and aim of our musical entertainments, as well as of every other public exhibition.

Instrumental Music, it is true, may alone have considerable influence upon Adepts in the *Science* of it, or upon the practical musician, who considers it as exemplifying the rules of his art; but it hath been a frequent subject of amusement with me, to observe, how drowsy and inattentive the generality of an audience at a concert sit, where an affectation of musical feelings does not bring their muscles into action, till they are awakened by a vocal performance, which, however trifling the subject, or however  
mean

mean the verification, gives expression to their features, and indeed how can they be other than unmoved, whilst that, which was designed by Nature as an Accompaniment only, is made Principal in the Execution; and the Voice (which considered simply as a *Musical Instrument*, and independent of the sense conveyed by words, is the sweetest to the human ear \*)

can

\* That the Notes of the Human Voice, so far as they can reach, are the most agreeable of all musical sounds, will be abundantly evident to any persons who shall try the experiment of Sol-fa-ing some of Corelli's compositions, designed for instruments only, which, as they were the first attempts amongst the Moderns, to give sentiment to mere sounds, so they will be found, perhaps, the most perfect in their kind: and whereas in the compositions of most other Musicians, the Melody either gives place to the Harmony, or, when expression is the chief aim, the Harmony falls short of the Melody; Corelli's Genius is equal to them both, and capable of conducting them together, so as almost equally to assist in the completion of his Design. It is the same in his Fugues, the several parts of which are so contrived, as to give strength, firmness,

can but rarely be admitted to bear even an inconsiderable under-part in the Entertainment. A Musician, of the last age, has observed, that instrumental Music, when it is not the accompaniment of Song, hath a near affinity with what are called nonsense Verses in Poetry—all metre, and no meaning. A musical Blacksmith, it is true, or a child of five or six

firmness, and expression to each other, and at the same time be capable of standing by themselves. It is to be lamented, that his incomparable examples gave occasion to the separating melody and Harmony from Song, which, before his time, were, generally, if not always, united; since I cannot but look upon this divorce of what Nature has joined together, as one principal cause of the corruption of our Music. Notwithstanding all the boasted powers of their melody (for their Harmony was very inconsiderable) I apprehend the Greeks to have had no merely instrumental concerts even in their musical Theatres, though they endeavoured to prepare the minds of an Audience for the impressions of some dramatic Scene, by the *προαύλιον*, or Overture,



years old, shall, sometimes, rouse a whole audience into attention and astonishment, with their melody and harmony alone, and make the great wigs lean together over the Harpsichord, in all the formality of critical admiration: the compositions of such self-taught persons are, undoubtedly, to be considered as curiosities; but it hath been said, with the strictest truth I believe, either by Dr. Brown, or by Tartini, that, till the Poet, the Philosopher, and the Musician, are united in the same person, we must not expect to feel the full powers of Music; and such characters, I ween, are not likely to be brought together from the *cradle*, or the *anvil*, notwithstanding what hath been said of Pythagoras's musical hammers.

I inclose two attempts towards an Oratorio for a Family-concert, of different characters, and wish, that our ingenious friend Mr. S. would compose a suitable  
melody

melody and harmony for one, or both of them, when he is at leisure from more important studies ; his extraordinary musical genius would give distinction to them, imperfect as they are, and might, possibly, set the fashion of uniting sound and sense again together (instead of those little *crashes* of mere musical notes, as they are sometimes not improperly called) that would go on to the production of more exact and finished performances than these inartificial sketches, which might contribute not only to delight the ear, but, at the same time, to inspire the sentiments of Religion and Virtue ; and, certainly, there are no subjects, or language, so sweetly adapted for musical cadence, either in the grand or the pathetic style, as may be found in the holy Scriptures.

I am, &c.

BA-



B A L A A M:

A N

ATTEMPT TOWARDS

A N

O R A T O R I O,

F O R

A PRIVATE CONCERT.

1769.

R A L A M

STREET TOWN

AT

O R I T O R I O

FOR

A SELECTED COMPANY

1801



T O  
M A R G A R E T  
L A D Y B E A U M O N T,  
O F  
D U N M O W,  
I N T H E C O U N T Y O F E S S E X,  
T H I S A T T E M P T  
I S W I T H T H E U T M O S T G R A T I T U D E  
I N S C R I B E D,  
B Y H E R L A D Y S H I P ' S  
M O S T O B L I G E D,  
A N D M O S T O B E D I E N T  
H U M B L E S E R V A N T,

Onehouse,  
Nov. 6, 1786.

THE COMPILER.

P E R S O N S.

BALAK, King of Moab.

BALAAM, a Prophet of God, from Aram in Mesopotamia,  
but swerving from his Duty through Ambition.

Prophetic Chorus of Men and Women, Attendants upon  
Balaam.

---

S U B J E C T.

*THAT the Completion of God's temporal and spiritual Promises to Abraham, respecting the Grandeur and the Multitude of his Posterity, and the Redemption of Mankind by the Messiah, in whom all the Nations of the Earth were to be blessed, however counteracted and opposed, could not be hindered by the Cruelty and Malice of wicked Men, or by the Power of evil Spirits.*

B A L A A M, &c.

---

ACT THE FIRST.

OVERTURE.

B A L A A M.

*Recitative.*

R I S E up Balak, and hear—  
hearken unto me Thou Son of Zippör.

*Recitative accompanied.*

God is not a Man that he should lie,  
nor a *son* of man, that he should repent.

—Hath He said, and shall he not do it?

—Hath He spoken, and shall he not fulfil his word?

LEADER OF THE PROPHETIC CHORUS OF MEN.

*Recitative accompanied.*

There is no Enchantment against Jacob,  
neither any Divination against Israel.

—Seek

—Seek no more for lying Vanities ;  
but set thy Face toward the Wilderneys,  
and behold the People encamping by their Tribes.

LEADER OF THE PROPHETIC FEMALE BAND.

*Recitative.*

Rapt in the Visions of God,  
He is fallen into a Trance,  
but having his Eyes open.  
—Attend to the Prophetic Strain—

B A L A A M.

*Song.*

How goodly are thy Tents, O Jacob !  
and thy Tabernacles, O Israel !  
From the Tops of Peor I behold them,  
Extended as the Streams along the Vallies.  
As Gardens by the Side of Jordan.  
—Blessed is he that bleffeth Thee,  
and curfed is he that curfeth Thee.

B A L A K.

*Recitative.*

I called Thee to curse mine Enemies,  
and Thou hast blessed them altogether.

BALAAM.

B A L A A M.

*Recitative accompanied.*

How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed ?  
I have received Commandment from the Lord to *bles*s,  
and he hath blessed——

B A L A K.

*Recitative.*

Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all——  
For why should'st thou be kept from Honour.

B A L A A M.

*Recitative.*

Let me die the Death of the righteous,  
and let my *last* End be like his——

*Recitative accompanied.*

I shall see him, but not now ;  
I shall behold him, but not nigh ;  
A Star shall arise out of Jacob,  
And a *Sceptre* shall spring out of Israel,  
to smite the *Corners* of Moab.  
He shall lift up himself as a Lion,  
and drink the Blood of the slain.

LEADER



LEADER OF THE PROPHETIC CHORUS OF MEN.

*Song.*

The People shall dwell alone,  
and not be reckoned among the Nations.  
—God brought them forth out of Egypt.  
—The Shout of a King is among them.

*Full Chorus.*

Jehovah shall reign for ever and ever.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

---

ACT THE SECOND.

B A L A A M.

*Recitative.*

THE Lord made a Covenant with Abraham, saying,  
unto thy Seed have I given this Land, from the River  
of Ægypt to the River Euphrates; but unto the *Son* he  
saith, I will give Thee the Gentiles for thine Heritage, and  
the *utmost* Parts of the Earth for thy Possession. *Thy* Throne,  
O God, is for ever and ever !

LEADER

LEADER OF THE PROPHETIC FEMALE BAND.

*Recitative accompanied.*

O that Thou wouldest bow the Heavnes, and come down  
to proclaim Liberty to the Captives,  
to bind up the broken in heart,  
and to comfort them that mourn.

LEADER OF THE PROPHETIC CHORUS OF MEN.

*Recitative accompanied.*

Faint not, neither be dismayed;  
Let thy Song be with the Voice of Triumph:  
Mercy and Truth have met together,  
and Righteousness hath looked down from Heaven—  
The Saviour, the Redeemer, shall come unto his People.  
He shall deal his Bread to the hungry,  
He shall cover the naked with a Garment,  
and their Miseries shall be remembered no more.

LEADER OF THE PROPHETIC FEMALE BAND.

*Song.*

Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear,  
break forth into singing, and cry aloud,  
the Redeemer the holy one of Israel,  
is the God of the whole Earth.

FULL PROPHETIC CHORUS.

*Song.*

Thine, O Lord, is the Greatness and the Power, and the  
 Glory,  
 for all that is in the Heaven and in the Earth is thine ;  
 and thy Dominion endureth throughout all ages.  
 Amen and Amen.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

---

ACT THE THIRD.

LEADER OF THE PROPHETIC CHORUS OF MEN.

*Recitative.*

**G**OD shall give the Victory unto Israel;  
 his King shall be higher than Agag :  
 he shall give his Children, an everlasting Kingdom  
 through his Son, whom he hath exalted  
 to have Dominion over all Things,  
 and to ransom from the Power of the Grave.

LEADER

LEADER OF THE PROPHETIC CHORUS OF MEN,

A N D

LEADER OF THE PROPHETIC BAND OF  
WOMEN.

*Song Duet.*

He that hath the Son hath Life.

He that hath not the Son hath not Life.

B A L A A M.

*Recitative accompanied.*

Behold ! the Tabernacle of God is with Men,

He shall dwell with them,

and they shall be his People :

He shall wipe away all tears from their eyes,

and there shall be no more Death,

neither Sorrow nor Pain.

LEADER OF THE PROPHETIC CHORUS.

*Song.*

I am the Resurrection and the Life, saith the Lord.

He that believeth in me shall not die for ever.

**FULL CHORUS.**

*Song.*

**Allelujah!—Salvation, and Glory, and Honour, and Power,  
unto the Lord our God!**

**Amen—Allelujah!—Amen.**



R U T H :

A N

ATTEMPT TOWARDS

A N

O R A T O R I O,

F O R

A PRIVATE CONCERT.

1769.

1997

TO  
MISS EMILY SMEAR,  
OF  
FROSTENDEN,  
IN THE COUNTY OF SUFFOLK;  
R U T H:

AN ATTEMPT TOWARDS  
AN ORATORIO,  
FOR A FAMILY CONCERT,  
IS INSCRIBED, BY THE COMPILER,  
AS A TOKEN OF HIS MOST FRIENDLY RESPECT,  
FOR THE DAUGHTER OF HIS FRIEND.

Onehouse,  
Jan. 1, 1787:

## P E R S O N S.

NAŌMI, Wife of Elimelech.

RUTH and ŌRPAH, Wives of Mahlōn and Chīlōn.

BOAZ, a chief Person in Beth-lehem Judah.

Company of Bethlehemites.

Companions of the Bridegroom.

Companions of the Bride.

Chorus of Men.—Chorus of Women.

---

## S U B J E C T.

ELIMELECH, from Want of Confidence in the Promises of God, leaves Beth-lehem in Judah, during a Famine, to sojourn with Idolaters in the Country of Moab; and takes his Wife Naomi, and his Sons, Mablon and Chilion, with him; he dieth in Sibmah, and his Sons also, after having married two of the Daughters of the Land, in Express Violation of the \* Law of God, upon which Naomi returns into her own Country, accompanied with Ruth, the Wife of Mablon, who renounces the Idolatry of the Moabites, for the Worship of the God of Israel—They arrive at Beth-lehem, in the Season of Barley Harvest, where Naomi had a Kinsman of the Family of her Husband, a Man of great Power and Wealth, whose Name was Boaz, who marries Ruth, and redeems the Estate of Elimelech, agreeable to the Law, in the xxvth Chapter of the Book of Deuteronomy.

\* Joshua xxiii. 12. and Deut. xxv. 3.

R U T H, &c.

---

ACT THE FIRST.

OVERTURE.

LEADER OF THE CHORUS OF MEN.

*Recitative.*

THERE was a Famine in the Land of Judah.

The Labour of the Olive hath failed,  
and the Fields yield no Meat.

Elimelech is gone forth from Beth-lehem  
and his Wife and his two Sons with him,  
but that which he greatly feared is fallen upon him ;  
he fainteth in the fruitful Plains of Moab,  
he dieth in a Land of Strangers.

LEADER OF THE FEMALE BAND.

*Song.*

I will weep for thee, Naomi,  
Thou wast beautiful as Tirzah,  
but Clouds and Storms have overshadowed thee.



Thou Vine upon the fruitful Hill,  
 thy Prop is overthrown, thou art fallen.  
 I will weep for the Mother with the Children.

LEADER OF THE CHORUS OF MEN.

*Recitative.*

Mahlon and Chilion became lovely in the Eyes of the Daughters of Moab, and they took them Wives of the Women of the Land : the Name of the one was Orpah, and the Name of the other Ruth.

LEADER OF THE FEMALE BAND.

*Song.*

Short are the Transports of unhallowed Nuptials !  
 Walk *Thou* in thine Integrity with God ;  
 and he will comfort thee in all thy Troubles ;  
 in Famine he will redeem thee from Death,  
 and thy Sun shall go down in Brightness.

LEADER OF THE CHORUS OF MEN.

*Recitative accompanied with slow and solemn Melody.*

Lamentation in the Streets of Sibmah—

Mahlon and Chilion died also ;

—both of them died—

The Woman is left of her two Sons and of her Husband,

My

N A O M I.

*Song.*

My heart fainteth within me—  
 Women of Midian, look down and see;  
 Can there be Sorrow like mine?  
 I am bereaved of my Children,  
 and my Comforter is gone down to the Grave.  
 My Soul is weary of my Life.

LEADER OF THE FEMALE BAND.

*Recitative accompanied.*

We mourn thy Lot. Sweet Lily of the Vale!  
 more fragrant than the Rose of Sharon!  
 thy Blossoms are untimely withered,  
 and thy Leaves are scattered with the Tempest;  
 they rustle by the Ledges of the Rocks,  
 they float upon the Stream of Jazer.

F U L L C H O R U S.

*Song.*

O place thy Confidence in God,  
 his Mercy is over all his works,  
 and his Mercy endureth for ever.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

# ACT THE SECOND.

LEADER OF THE CHORUS OF MEN.

*Recitative.*

**T**HEN arose Naomi to return unto the Land of Judah, for she had heard, how that the Lord had given Bread unto his People: and her Daughters-in-law went on the Way with her; and she said unto her Daughters-in-law, Go, each return unto thy Mother's House.

ORPAH AND RUTH.

*Song. Duet.*

• Surely we will return with thee unto *thy* People.

N A O M I.

*Recitative accompanied.*

Why should you follow Wretchedness, my Daughters,  
my Sons are perished in their Strength—

Can I yet be the Mother of more?

—The Lord deal kindly with you,

as you have dealt with the dead—  
—and with me.

ORPAH, RUTH, AND NAOMI.

*Song. Trio.*

Farewell a thousand times !  
A thousand times farewell !—Farewell !

LEADER OF THE CHORUS OF MEN.

*Recitative.*

Again they lifted up their Voice, and wept aloud,  
and Orpah kissed her Mother-in-law,  
but Ruth still clave unto her Bosom.

N A O M I.

*Recitative accompanied.*

Return, thou widow'd Excellence, unto thy People ;  
go back unto thy Sister ; and the Lord give you rest ;  
each in the House of her Husband.

RUTH.

## R U T H.

*Recitative accompanied.*

\* Beauty of Israel !

most lov'd ! most honour'd amongst Matrons !

Turn not thy Face away,

For why wilt thou break my heart ?

*Song.*

—Intreat me not to leave thee,

Whither thou goest will I go ;

Where thou *dies*t will I die ;and *there* will I be buried———Thy God do so to *me*, and more also,if aught but *Death* part thee and me.

## FULL CHORUS.

*Song.*

Blessed be thou amongst Women :

The Lord lift up his Countenance upon thee.

Go in Peace.

## END OF THE SECOND ACT.

\* Her Name Naōmi, which signifies agreeable, beautiful, or pleasant, was, probably, added as a cognomen, expressive of the Gracefulness and Elegance of her Person and Manners.

A C T



# ACT THE THIRD.

COMPANY OF BETHLEHEMITES.

*Recitative.*

WHO is this that cometh weeping  
through the Wilderneck of Moab ?

Can it be Naomi ?

How is her Countenance changed !

N A O M I.

*Recitative accompanied.*

Call me not Naomi : call me Marah \*,  
for the Lord hath dealt very bitterly with me.

LEADER OF THE FEMALE BAND.

*Recitative.*

She went out full, and the Lord hath brought her home  
again empty : Why call ye her Naomi, seeing the Almighty  
hath afflicted her ?

\* Marah signifies Bitterness.

F U L L.

FULL CHORUS.

*Song.*

The Lord knoweth them that be *his* ;  
Heaviness may endure for a Night,  
but Joy cometh in the Morning.

LEADER OF THE CHORUS OF MEN.

*Recitative.*

And Ruth, the Moabitess, said unto her Mother-in-law,  
Let me now go into the Field, and glean Ears of Corn after  
thy Kinsman, in whose Sight I shall find Grace : and as  
Boaz came from Beth-lehem to his Reapers, the Moabitish  
Damsel met him.

R U T H.

*Recitative accompanied with soft and plaintive Melody.*

Let me glean after the Reapers in thy Field,  
and my Soul shall bless thee.

B O A Z.

*Song.*

Sweet is thy Voice, my Daughter,  
and thy Countenance is comely.  
Abide thee fast by my Maidens,

mark

mark well what Fields they reap—  
and do thou follow them.

*Recitative accompanied.*

Thy Looks are as the Eye-lids of the Morning,  
bright-shining after Rain—  
—Glean Thou in no other Fields.

R U T H.

*Recitative accompanied.*

How have I found Grace in thy Sight,  
seeing I am a stranger, and am not like  
unto one of thy Handmaidens ?

*Recitative.*

All that thou hast done unto thy Mother-in-law, since the  
Death of thy Husband, hath been showed to me ; and all  
the \* City of my People doth know, that thou art a virtuous  
Woman : thou hast left thy Father and thy Mother, and the  
Land of thy Nativity, for a People whom thou knowest not  
heretofore :

\* The Word here translated City, means properly the Gate,  
the Forum, or Seat of Judgment, which, as the chief Place of  
Concourse, is sometimes put for the Body of the Citizens.

LEADER

LEADER OF THE CHORUS OF MEN.

*Song.*

O trust Thou in the Strength of Israel.

FULL CHORUS.

*Song.*

Hope thou in the Lord, and keep his Way,

and he shall promote thee :

He will give thee thy full Reward.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

## ACT THE FOURTH.

LEADER OF THE CHORUS OF MEN.

*Recitative accompanied from 'Let her glean' &c. to 'and  
the Soul of Boaz' &c.*

AND Boaz commanded his young Men—  
Let her glean among the Sheaves,  
Let fall also some Handfulls on Purpose,  
that she may glean them ;

Forbear

Forbear to reproach her.  
And the Soul of Boaz clave unto the Damsel,  
that she became his Wife.

SEMICHORUS COMPANIONS OF THE BRIDE-  
GROOM.

*Song.*

Thy Wife be as the fruitful Vine  
upon the Walls of thy House!  
Thy Children like to Olive-branches  
round about thy Table!  
Do thou worthily in Ephrata!  
Be thou famous in Beth-lehem!

SEMICHORUS COMPANIONS OF THE BRIDE,

A gracious Woman shall inherit Honour;  
her Price is far above Rubies.  
Many Daughters have done virtuously,  
but Thou excellest them all.

R U T H.

It is God who maketh poor and maketh rich,  
He bringeth low, and lifteth up.  
O my Soul, forget not all his Benefits!

LEADER



LEADER OF THE CHORUS OF MEN.

*Song.*

Great are the Troubles of the righteous,  
but the Lord delivereth them out of all.  
Blessed be the Lord for ever more.

Amen and Amen.

LETTER

## L E T T E R    XXXVII.

1773.

DEAR CHARLES,

**I**T is remarkable, that the first Civilizers of barbarous Nations, are represented as having excelled, not only in personal bravery, but in music and poetry; by the joint powers of which, they are said to have vanquished monsters, built cities, imposed laws, and reclaimed men from the horrors and beastliness of a savage life; nor was it peculiar to Orpheus to have subdued the rugged manners of his Thracians, by the powers of melody and song: It is a *general* character of the first founders of states, that they were Poets and

Musicians, as well as Heroes ; and I may add too, that they are represented as having given force to their precepts, by the efficacy of measured motions, as well as melody and song. That is by the united energy of Music, Poetry, and Dancing. Music and Poetry were not separated in the ideas of the Antients ; a circumstance, that will account to you for the extraordinary effects attributed to antient Music, which, in my opinion, could not possibly have been produced by the Harmony of instrumental sounds alone, *ἡ Μῆσαι*, saith Plato, *παντάπασιν ἡμῶς μέμψαιτο εἰ νομίζομεν αὐτῶν ἔργον εἶναι κιθάραν καὶ αὐλὴς, ἀλλὰ μὴ τὸ παιδεύειν τὰ ἥθη, καὶ παρηγορεῖν τὰ πάθη τῶν χρωμένων τοῖς μέλεσι καὶ ἀρμονίαις :* and in his 2d book of a Republic, which explains this Passage, he expressly says, that Poetry was comprehended in his notion of Music ; but Plutarch not only considered Music as imperfect without song,

song, but in the 8th book of his Symposiacs, explains the Fable of Marsyas in this light, representing his punishment as *just*, for presuming to oppose the simple melody of his pipe, to the joint expression of the Voice and Lyre. We are told by Homer, in the 3d book of the Odyssæy, that when Agamemnon went to the siege of Troy, he left his Queen Clytemnestra, under the care of a Bard, who was the Guardian of her Honour, and that her Virtue could not be corrupted, till Ægisthus had procured his banishment to a desert Island,

Where He, the sweetest of the *sacred* Train,  
Sung dying to the Rocks, but sung in vain.

To return to the founders of States:  
The Joy upon killing some wild Beast, or  
savage Tyrant, a more cruel Enemy of the  
human species, would naturally break out  
into songs of Triumph by the victor, ac-

accompanied with measured movements  
 (which may be considered as the rudiments of dancing) in which the rest of the district would join ; these expressions of exultation, must naturally raise the Hero's influence with his Tribe ; upon all similar occasions, it would, as naturally, give an extraordinary weight to his opinion or advice ; and, in the end, would establish him in a kind of regal Authority ; his Dress, his Weapons, his manner of defending himself, or of attacking an Enemy, as described in these rude songs of Victory, would become the general usage, and, in time, characteristic of the Tribe or Nation ; the Songs themselves delivered down by oral tradition assisted by some rude symbolic characters, would be regarded with the utmost reverence, and upon the introduction of Letters amongst them, in all probability, would be the first things committed to writing,

and



and become the ground-work of their national History, and legal institutions. Thus the excellence of the Parthians in the use of the Bow, and of the Majorcans in that of the Sling, might be owing to their imitation of some Chiefs, whose respective examples (as described in these poetical narratives, which were originally accompanied with music and dancing) influenced them in the practice of these weapons, till it became the general manner of bringing up their Children, and a disgrace not to excel in the use of them.

In like manner before the invention of Guns, the fashionable amusement of all ranks of people, in England, was shooting with the long Bow ; and to be a good Archer, was as necessary an accomplishment as to have been a good Dancer, or a good Lutenist in the Days of Charles II. We had gained several considerable victories by a superior skill in the use of the Bow,

particularly by the manner of laying or throwing our bodies forward into it, instead of drawing it by the strength of arm only, as described by Bishop Latimer, in his Sixth Sermon before King Edward the VIth, and the neglect of planting a Yew-tree in every church-yard, to furnish us with Bow-staves (from whence, probably, it obtained the epithet of mournful ) was fineable by common Law\*. We may trace back this expertness in Archery *beyond* our neighbours, in the remains of some heroic songs, composed by British Bards, and many of our less antient Ballads were, doubtless, taken from the more inaccurate compositions of the Bards of our Feudal Chiefs, and Legislators, animating their Countrymen to Acts of Prowess, by extolling the Courage of some Warrior, and by describing his expertness in the use of our

\* See Cowel's Interpreter.

national weapons : these influenced our Manners, and the Manners of every Nation are the Foundation of its Laws : What has been said, seems strongly to favour the apparent paradox, that poetical compositions had, in all Countries, precedence in point of time, to those in Prose, though it does not prove it. But not to mention the Arentos of the Indians, the only Histories of the Danes, before Saxo and Snorro, were the songs of their antient Bards. All the Gothic Expeditions were preserved only in that Species of Poetry, called *Runes* ; and we know little of the *Welsh*, *Scotch*, and *Irish*, in very early times, but what is thought to have been *collected* from similar materials.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R   XXXVIII.

TO THE

REV. DR. GORDON,

PRECENTOR AND ARCHDEACON OF LINCOLN.

Hensted, Nov. 1775.

DEAR SIR,

**T**HE following plain and almost literal translation of the triumphal Song of Moses and the Children of Israel, upon the destruction of the Host of Pharaoh, in the Red Sea, is submitted to your Judgment; it was written four years ago, but thrown by, upon perusing what pleased me much better—a Translation, or rather Imitation of it, in the Dactylic Alcaic Metre, published by Dr. Burton, in the  
year

year 1736, with many other ingenious exercises, of a similar kind, which do honour to the Students of CCC in Oxford at that Period, and to the learned Editor, who had been Director of their Studies ; but however classically elegant it is, I have since thought, that it falls short of its simple grandeur in the original Hebrew, unfettered by any returning measure. The prophetic confidence expressed in it, that God would drive out the usurping Nations from the Land promised to their Fathers, and plant them *in*, gives it a connection with the Oratorio of Balaam, which I read to you last year ; and, I trust, you will not disapprove my distributing this sacred Hymn into Parts, though unauthorised by any Commentator, as the occasion upon which it was composed, with the manner of expression, seem to evince the propriety of ranking it in the class of those Carmina amœbæa,

which



which so frequently occur in the Book of Psalms, and other poetical Parts of the sacred Scriptures.

The Israelites arrived at the Heroopolitan fork of the Red Sea, upon the evening of the fifth day after their departure from the extensive Plains on the East of Kairo (and not upon the third, according to Josephus) as may reasonably be presumed, from the distance, which is not less than fifty English miles to the Easternmost opening of the Defile between the Mountains, called the Mouth of Hiroth [*Pi-ehiroth*] which extended almost to the Gulph; they passed the Sea about Midnight, and, harrassed as they were, may be supposed to have encamped immediately upon some neighbouring eminence, enlightened by the Pillar of the cloud, which shone at an amazing height, and with a dazzling lustre, owing to the blackness of the atmosphere behind it.

From

From hence, descending in the morning, they beheld the dead bodies of the Ægyptians thrown together with the uprooted Weeds upon the Shore ; deeply affected with their miraculous deliverance, and contemplating the great work which Jehovah had wrought for them upon their Enemies, they returned in awful exultation to the Hill.

The sacred text does not inform us how long the Israelites remained in their first Encampment, after passing through the Sea, before they marched into the wilderness of Sûr, along the coast towards the South. They had now no enemy to fear ; some time would be required to spoil the Ægyptians, and avail themselves of their Arms ; be this as it may, it is allowing a sufficient interval for instructing the People in their parts of this Hymn of Victory, if we suppose it to have been dictated upon the evening of the sixth,  
and

and sung, in a triumphal procession round the Camp, upon the morning of the *seventh* day after the Passover, which was soon, by the express command of God, to succeed in the place\* of the Patriarchal Sabbath; to an observance of which, all men, of whatever country, were obliged, as *Men*: Upon the latter, the Israelites were particularly enjoined, to commemorate this miraculous deliverance from Ægyptian bondage, as his *chosen People*, together with the Birth of Time, and the *Creation* of the World.

The Adamical and Patriarchal Sabbath, was the beginning of days to the whole human race, and its observance, in some way or other, appears, from the testimony of Historians, to have been universal †.

\* Deut. v. 15.

† Sufficient Authorities for this, are referred to in Hooker's Eccles. Polity; Purchas's Pilgrimage; Dr. Kennicot's Second Dissert. 1747; and in many other Treatises.

The day of the Israelitish Sabbath was peculiar, and belonged to no other people under Heaven than the Sons of Jacob : it was, of course, therefore, to cease with the OEconomy of that favoured Nation ; no new and exprefs command seems to have been required for men's returning to the original appointment of a seventh day of rest and Praise, and, accordingly, we find none recorded in the New Testament, but the *first* day of the week was hallowed as the Sabbath, by the Apostles, and their Successors, without any particular injunction, or any reasons assigned for a change of it, from the *last*, which might have been expected, upon the assembling of the Apostles at Jerusalem, to consider what ordinances were to be given to the Gentiles, had the circumstances of the case not been too clear to require any.

I have had an antiquary's pleasure, in reflecting upon this triumphant Song, as  
the

the oldest example of Poetry in the World, unless we may consider the address of Lamech to his wives, or the Prophecies of Noah, and some other of the dying Patriarchs, concerning the Fate of their Posterity, as metrical compositions.

Then sang Moses, and the Sons of Israel;  
this Song unto JEHOVAH:

MOSES.

I will sing unto JEHOVAH,  
for he hath triumph'd, for he hath triumph'd.

The Horse, with his Rider,  
he hath overthrown in the Sea.

JEHOVAH is my Strength and my Glory,  
He hath delivered me from Destruction.

He is my GOD §, and I will prepare him a Tabernacle.  
The GOD § of my *Father*, and I will extol him.

§ Aleim.—I apprehend the Word ALEİM, in both these Places, to imply, God's having entered into Covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, from ALE an Oath. See Gen. xxvi. v. 3.



PEOPLE.

JEHOVAH, the Eternal, is our Protector and Defence,  
He who LIVETH, whose Name is JEHOVAH.  
The Chariots of Pharaoh, and his Host,  
he hath cast into the Ocean.

His chosen Captains are overwhelmed  
in the *Sea of Weeds*.  
They sunk to the Bottom as a Stone.  
The Deeps have covered them.

MOSES.

Thy right Hand, O JEHOVAH !  
is glorious in the Might of thy Power.  
With thy right Hand thou hast beaten down the Enemy.  
Thou shalt pursue with Terrors,  
and in the Greatness of thy Majesty,  
shalt thou destroy thine Adversaries,  
who exalt themselves against thee.  
Thou shalt *send* out thy Wrath :  
It shall burn them like Stubble—  
By a Blast of thy Displeasure  
were the Waters thrown together in a Heap.  
The Waves stood upright as a Mound:  
The Deeps were congealed  
in the Heart of the Sea.

## PEOPLE.

I will pursue ; I will overtake, and lay hold upon the Spoil ;  
 My Sword shall be unsheathed to devour.  
 My Revenge shall be satiated.

My Arm shall bring them back to Bondage.  
 It shall drive the Slaves to their Task.  
*How impious the Enemy ! how impotent !*  
 Thou didst blow with thy Breath,  
 The Ocean overwhelmed them.

They sunk like Lead  
 in the contending Billows.

## MOSES.

Who, amongst the Lords \*,  
 can be compar'd with Thee, O Jehovah !  
 Who so majestic in Sanctity.  
 How awful in thy Praises, working Wonders !  
 Thou stretchedst out thy right Hand,  
 The † Earth swallowed up the Boasters in their Pride.

\* Baalim.

† It is the opinion of some commentators, that the Division of the Sea was occasioned by an Earthquake, and that a part of the Ægyptian Host was swallowed in a chasm, upon their landing to begin the Carnage.

But

With Mercy shalt thou lead thy People,  
whom thou hast redeemed from Death.  
Thou shalt conduct them by thy Power;  
to the Habitation of thy Holiness.

The Nations have heard a Rumour, they are afraid,  
Sorrow shall take hold on the Inhabitants of Palæstine:

The Princes of Edom are confounded.  
Trembling hath seized the mighty Men of Moab.  
All the Inhabitants of Canaan melt for fear.

Dread and Horror shall fall upon them,  
for the Might of thy Arm.

They shall be dumb as a stone :  
Till thy People, O JEHOVAH, shall pass over.  
Till thy People shall pass over, whom thou hast redeemed:

Thou shalt bring them in:  
Thou shalt plant them  
upon the Mountain of thine Inheritance.

In the Place which thou hast made for thy Sabbath,

O JEHOVAH!

The Sanctuary which thy Hands, O Lord \*,  
have established.

P E O P L E .

JEHOVAH shall reign for ever and ever.

\* Adonai.

For the Horse went in. Pharaoh in his Chariot,  
with his Horsemen, into the Sea :

And JEHOVAH caused the Waters of the Sea  
to return upon them.

But the Children of Israel walked upon dry Ground  
in the Midst of the Ocean.

*As they approached the Gate of their Encampment, Miriam, the Prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a Timbrel in her hand, and came out to meet them, and all the Women followed her with timbrels and in dances, to whom she acted as Chorage, and sung the Prophetic parts of the same divine Hymn of Victory; which was now, most probably, performed within the Camp, and, we may presume, the whole Triumph closed, after a solemn pause, with a full Chorus, in which all the People joined their voices :*

JEHOVAH SHALL REIGN FOR EVER AND EVER.

LETTER

## L E T T E R   XXXIX.

1773

DEAR CHARLES,

**I** TAKE up my pen, at present, rather to get rid of some ideas which are disagreeable, and for the sake of varying the train of them, than that I have any thing particular upon which to write; you will, therefore, endeavour to be satisfied with whatever accident may offer to you, and not look for strict connection, in what I shall make the subject of my letter.

My thoughts are called towards you, and your brother, by a late misfortune which has happened in a worthy family. I wish you could learn to swim, and will get the garden Pond in order against you both return, to accomplish it with as little



danger as possible, though I know you had rather attempt it elsewhere : Sir G. runs great hazards in driving through the waves, when they swell and dash with violence against the shore, but I have prevailed, to have a person attend on these occasions, with a cord fastened to his wrist, that he may help him in getting back through the breakers, which their reflux renders it very difficult to do, when the strength is much diminished ; and he is disposed to swim off too far, till he appears as a speck only upon the top of a Wave, and to continue in the sea too long.

A love of difficulties, and even dangers to a certain degree, seems to be rooted in our nature, to prepare us, probably, for surmounting such as in the ordinary course of life are unavoidable ; we *delight* in creating them, when they are not offered to us, and there are few persons but have felt, at one time or another, a strong inclination to attempt things which appeared

peared almost impracticable, and to run into danger, merely, as it should seem, for the retrospective pleasure, or the honour of having escaped through it.

A similar inclination operates with respect to Science; it is astonishing how some people will labour to acquire a knowledge of what, when it is obtained, is of little or no use to them; there must, therefore, be a sort of Fox-hunter's pleasure, in such cases, annexed to the mere pursuit of what is trifling in itself; considered as an end, beside what results from its attainment; but some latent good to the public, unexpected by the honest Labourer in Science, hath frequently been the consequence, though not always the reward, of his pains: The Science of conic Sections for instance, I believe, was conducted by the inventor without any particular view; he took infinite trouble for a very distant generation indeed, for I

do not recollect, that it was applied to any valuable purposes in Science till the time of Sir Isaac Newton. In the attempt to gain a knowledge of any thing, which is either necessary to our Being, or perfective of our happiness, how wisely it is ordered, that we should be animated by the difficulties attending the pursuit—that we should be carried forward with an accelerated movement, in proportion to the obstacles to be removed; and yet that an impossibility of acquiring what we aim at, *once* known, it should immediately put an end to our *Desires*, as well as our *pursuits*, and utterly extinguish our most passionate wishes; were it otherwise, we should be in the condition of the poor Tailor, who died for love of Queen Elizabeth. I might have found an instance nearer home than the business of conic Sections, you will think, to illustrate the subject of our strenuous idleness, The study of Music,

at

at my time of life, can answer no practical purpose to myself; yet I pursue it with the utmost pleasure, and, in truth, it never tires me; I wish these remarks may not tire you.

A late Letter to you, just touched upon the subject of græcian Music, and I observed, that in the diatonic scale of eight notes from the gravest inclusive, there are two of them denominated hemitones; the case is precisely the same in modern music; and whenever these hemitonic intervals are in their natural situation between the third and fourth, and the seventh and eight notes from the gravest, such an *octave* of musical sounds, is said to be a sharp Key, which is peculiarly adapted to express, or to accompany cheerfulness and gaiety. But it is to be observed, that Providence hath established two different species of Melody, the one cheerful and sprightly, and the other

C c 4                      melancholy,

melancholy, but soothing, that we might not want a suitable entertainment in either state of Mind: Cheerful Music to the heavy-hearted under very deep Concern, is an insult upon the wretched—a kind of tacit rebuke for the weakness of a man's spirit. We feel some relief even in an indulgence of our sorrows: the *natural* train of our ideas is the most agreeable to us in all cases; and whatever directly opposes that succession of our Thoughts, so as to aim at breaking their connection entirely by attempting to raise a direct contrary Emotion, will not only, in general, fail of attaining its end, but give us great disgust. To oppose a Passion *directly*, only makes the tide of it rise the higher, and rage with greater violence. Those who are deeply distressed then, would have lost the immediate benefit of this divine medicine of Affliction, if our gracious Creator had not framed a  
peculiar



peculiar kind of it, which by I know not what sympathetic movements it excites, makes us *bear* away our Grievs, and gives a fresh spring to the powers both of body and of mind ; and as a farther instance of tendernefs and compaffion to the wants of his creatures, He hath given it more alluring charms, and captivating sweetness, to engage our attention, in proportion to the greater ufefulness and neceffity of it for the folace of human Life.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R

## L E T T E R   X L.

DEAR CHARLES,

THE soothing melody I have mentioned, hath its hemitones placed differently in the Octave, which is called a *flat Key*, from the order in which I said they were situated in what is termed a *sharp Key*. The soothing melody of a flat Key hath its hemitones between the *second* and *third* notes of the Octave, and between the *seventh* and *eighth*, in ascending from grave to acute: and in descending through it, from the acutest note to the gravest, it has the *acuter* hemitone of the two between the *sixth* and *fifth* notes, and the *graver* hemitone, as it was placed in its ascending situation, between the *third* and *second*. I have added their position in each Key,

Key, ascending and descending, beginning at C, in a sort of scale for more clearness :

*SHARP KEY.* C D E hemit. F G A B hemit. C ascending  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 & descend.

In a *FLAT KEY*, the Order of *HEMITONES* are

ascending C D hemit. E F G A B hemit. C  
as 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8  
descending C D hemit. E F G hemit. A B C  
as 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Although I am of opinion that what is called a flat Key doth not so readily admit of cheerful sprightly airs, I would not be supposed to mean, that the sharp Key is wholly *inconsistent* with the soothing style of Music, but only, that a flat Key is best adapted to it, and more suitable to the allaying of deep Grief, where the Heart is ready to sink under the burthen of its sorrows ; and in this case, if Music can be of any immediate service, it

it must be of the latter kind, if I may judge from my own feelings. The change from a flat to a sharp Key, or from a sharp to a flat Key, may give an agreeable variety to a musical composition, without entirely changing its character, and such a mutation is often required to excite a different tone of the same Passion or affection; but to do this with propriety, not only a thorough knowledge of the power of Sounds, but an intimate acquaintance with human Nature, is as necessary in the Musician, as in the Poet, or the Orator; for if a composer, after thus changing the Key, should go beyond a certain boundary, his music would not only run into a *variety* of style, but tend to raise inconsistent emotions, to destroy the unity of his Performance, and distract the mind, instead of giving it delight: but so long as he continues in the *same* Key, the Hemitones must pre-  
serve

serve their proper places in it, that is, they must continue at the same relative pitch whenever they are used.

It will readily, I make no doubt, occur to you, as an objection to what I have been saying, that if in every Octave there are only two hemitones, which should be placed at such a distance from each other as to preserve their precise degree of Pitch; what is called the chromatic style in modern Music, must, therefore, be unnatural, in which several notes follow each other immediately, which yet is allowed by the best judges to have, in *some* cases, a peculiar Beauty and Elegance. In answer to this supposed strong objection, you will consider, that the variety of musical expression requires we should not be confined to one single Key, and that whenever a new Hemitone is introduced, the Key is actually changed; it follows, that if two hemitones are played in immediate succession,



succession, they are not members of the same Octave, from their juxta position, but really belong to different Key-notes ; if we sharpen any note upon the Harp-fichord for instance, by playing it half a note higher, the note, thus altered, may be considered as a sharp seventh, but every young performer knows, that a new sharp seventh introduces a new Key Note, and thus a *second* succeeding half note is to be considered, as introducing a change of the Octave, which may be either in a flat or a sharp Key, at pleasure, as often as he thinks proper : *our* Chromatic style, therefore, as we improperly call it, consisting of a number of half notes in immediate succession, may be termed a *musical Liberty*, rather than a different species, or distinct style of Melody, as it does not continue in *any* Key, but is perpetually changing from one to another ; yet upon this *Liberty* the merit of some distinguished

distinguished compositions may depend, as it is pecculiarly adapted to express sorrow or disdain, or to excite such preparatory Emotions in the *hearts* of the Audience. I have only to remark to you, at present, that the power of a flat Key seems to depend much more upon its descending notes than upon its ascending ; for every judicious Ear must distinguish them to be less agreeable in the ascending series, than the descending, which constitutes its true Character. The flat Key is considered, I believe, by most of the great Musicians, as an artificial contrivance ; because it certainly has not the natural harmony of *sharp* third, fifth, and eighth, to support its claim to be a natural Key, the flat third not being so distinguishable in the composition of a single note ; but since a flat third, as well as a flat seventh, *may* be heard upon the Æolian Harp, the strings of which

are

are tuned Unisons, I have no doubt *myself*, but that it hath a claim to a foundation in natural harmony, since it is clear, from this very circumstance, that both a flat third and a flat seventh are constituent parts of every musical note.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R

## LETTER XLI.

DEAR CHARLES,

AS you are not yet advanced far enough in Mathematical knowledge to understand Kircher's treatise upon Musical Vibrations, I shall endeavour to give you as plain an account of them as I can without it, though not mathematically precise.

Notes in Music, like all other sounds, are the effect of a motion in the air, which is caused by a vibration of the parts of some elastic body, as of metals, glass, wood, stone, strings, or the glottis of animals, &c. after what manner this is done, or how the tremulous motion is produced by different instruments is not

necessary to be settled ; all I shall aim at, is to satisfy your curiosity, by comparing the vibrations of strings of different lengths, to found the eight natural notes of the Diatonic Guidonian Scale, both in a sharp and a flat Key : for all instruments, however various in their construction, as well as the human voice, have a certain analogy with them.

You are sufficiently acquainted with the nature of Pendulums, to know that they vibrate slower as their lengths are increased, and faster the more they are shortened ; this is the common principle known to every body, upon which we regulate the motion of our clocks, &c. but in what *proportion* they move faster or slower with different lengths, it is not necessary at present to enquire. The same thing is true, in general, of a musical string—the longer it is, the slower are its vibrations, and the graver its degree of Tune ; and  
the



the shorter it is, the quicker its vibrations return, and the sound becomes proportionably more acute, as I endeavoured to point out to you; previous to our considering the nature of the Greek accents; I would not have you suppose I mean here to insinuate, that the vibrations of Pendulums, and those of musical strings, are, in every respect, similar, and governed by the same laws; all I intend, is to *illustrate*; and a difference in the vibrations of Pendulums, of different lengths, being so very distinguishable when they describe considerable spaces, it renders them exceedingly proper for an explanation of the subject: I go on then to observe, that there is this remarkable circumstance likewise in the motion of Pendulums, that if the Arcs, through which a Pendulum vibrates, are extremely small, there is no *sensible* difference in the times of its vibration, from the instant it is first put

into motion till it rests, though it is carried *farther* upon the first impulse given to it, than in the successive vibratory returns; now this is *always* the case of any single-musical string, which has *both* its ends generally fixed and may be considered as a kind of double Pendulum.— Its longest vibrations, when it is first struck, are finished as soon as its shortest, when its motion is almost at an end; and this is the reason why the *same* string in vibration continues the *same* note, from the time of its first impulse, till the sound is heard no longer: upon the first impulse it moves to the greatest distance on either side of the place it occupied at rest, and, consequently, goes through this space at this instant, with the greatest velocity, upon which account, it strikes the ear, at such time, with most force, and its sound is *loudest*; as the space, through which it vibrates, is continually decreasing, its velocity

locity decreases in the same direct proportion, and the sound gradually dies away: yet still as the vibrations (though from points less and less distant) are performed in the same portions of time, there is no difference of *tune* produced by a difference of spaces run through, for the *same* note is continued by the same string, only less and less loud, till it is perfectly at rest.

The Greek writers have applied the word *τόνος* so very differently, as to have occasioned much confusion, and I wish, in this respect, we had not followed their example: Tone should never be used so as to be confounded with tune; the tune of a note respects its height in the scale, but the tone of a note should be restrained to the harshness or softness, or loudness, &c. of it, without respect to its place, as the tones of a flute differ from the tones of a bass viol, or hautboy; and two violins may be perfectly in unison, though

the tones of the one may be very displeasing, whilst those of the other are the sweetest imaginable. Those tones are least pleasing to the ear, which are caused by the vibration of bodies, whose parts are finest and most elastic, and which give the smartest percussion to the particles of air in contact with them, or to those which approach nearest to contact; for I am of opinion, that no two parts of matter are absolutely in contact with each other; the tone of an ivory flute for instance, is by far less mellow, than that of a flute made of wood; and the tones of steel wires less so, than those of brass; and a metal may be so unelastic, probably from its parts being too fine and too closely united, so as to give no sound at all that is musically pleasing. Thus Gold, without a due mixture of copper or other alloy, would be as dull to the ear as Lead; and hence the Alchymists say,

say, it is necessary to destroy the tone of any metal before it be capable of transmutation into *Sol*.

In order to show how the notes of the natural or diatonic octave may be ascertained with exactness, suppose a musical wire to be stretched upon a board, over two ledges fixed twenty inches asunder (or at any other distance from each other) to perform its vibrations in a certain time, which would produce a certain degree of tune, it is clear, that if you were to strain another wire, over the same ledges, to the same degree of tension with the first, it would perform its vibrations in the same time with the first, and upon your striking it with a quill, or your finger, would give precisely the same note; any two musical strings then which begin and end their vibrations at the same points of time, are precisely in unison; and on the contrary, when two strings begin to vi-



brate at the same time, and finish their several vibrations at different times, such strings must sound different notes. Let us now suppose the two strings I have mentioned as strained to the same degree of tension, to give each the note C.

Divide the small space between the two ledges into nine equal parts, and stop one of these parts, or prevent its vibrating, by thrusting a sharpish wedge at the point of division between the board and the string, upon striking the wire thus shortened, by a ninth part of its length, with a quill, it would sound D, and perform nine vibrations, whilst the open or unstopped string performed eight.

If again you divided the whole string into five equal parts, and stopped one of these five parts from vibrating, the remaining length of string would sound E, that is, a *greater third*, and vibrate five times, whilst the open string vibrated only four,

Divide

Divide the string into four equal parts, and stop one, the remainder will vibrate four times, whilst the open string vibrates thrice, and will sound F, or a perfect fourth,

Divide the string into three equal parts, and stop one, the remainder will vibrate three times, whilst the open string is vibrating twice, and sound G, that is, a perfect fifth.

If the string be divided into five equal parts, and two of such parts be stopped, the remainder will vibrate five times, whilst the open string vibrates thrice, and sound A, or the *greater sixth*,

If the string be divided into fifteen equal parts, and seven of them stopped, the remainder will vibrate fifteen times, whilst the open string vibrates eight, and sound the *greater seventh*, or B.

Lastly. Divide the string in the middle, that is, into two equal parts, and  
either

either of the parts will sound an eighth to the open string, giving two vibrations, whilst the open string vibrates once, and thus complete the seven diatonic intervals in a sharp Key, as they are fixed by the constitution of our Nature.

The mention of a *greater third*, a *greater sixth*, and a *greater seventh*, in the divisions of the string for those notes, implies a *lesser third*, a *lesser sixth*, and a *lesser seventh*, which belong to the soothing melody I spoke of, the last time I wrote to you, which is usually denominated a flat Key. Let us consider then, how the same string is to be divided to sound these notes :

Divide the whole length of the string into six equal parts, and stop one, the remainder will give the *lesser*, or the *flat third*, and perform six vibrations, whilst the open string is performing five.

If we divide the whole string into eight equal parts, and stop three, the remaining five parts of it give the *flat sixth*, which will vibrate eight times, whilst the open string vibrates five times,

The *lesser seventh* is found with sufficient exactness, by dividing the whole string into nine equal parts, and stopping four, and the length of these five parts together, will vibrate nine times, whilst the whole or the open string vibrates five, so that the vibrations of the open string, to the vibrations of those lengths which give the *lesser third*, the *lesser sixth*, and the *lesser seventh*, are nearly

as 5 to 6 for the flat third,

as 5 to 8 for the flat sixth,

and as 5 to 9 for the flat seventh ;

and universally the division of a string to sound any superior note, vibrates precisely as many times, as the difference between those parts and the parts stopped or hindered

dered from vibrating ; for instance, to find the length of the second string to sound D, the string which sounded C was to be divided into nine equal parts, and only one was to be stopped, a second, therefore, vibrates nine times, whilst the open string vibrates eight ; in other terms, make the number, of parts into which the open string is to be divided, the denominator of a fraction, and the number of parts stopped, the numerator, the vibrations of the divided string will then be to the vibrations of the open string, as the denominator of the fraction is, to the difference between the numerator and the denominator.

There is a peculiarity respecting musical strings in vibration, which is extremely curious, such strings, I mean, as are perfectly formed with respect to a lameness in the continuation of their diameters, and a uniform goodness of the  
metal



metal they are made of: when they are defective in either of these respects, they are said to be false, and must always give imperfect disagreeable sounds: the peculiarity I mean, is that a *perfect* musical string resolves itself into a certain number of parts, in the act of vibrating, the points between which, are relatively at rest, whilst the tone and tune of the whole is produced; and the reason why an inequality of its diameter in a portion of the string, or a badness of metal in any part of a musical wire causes a defect in the tone and tune of it, seems to be, because every musical note being made up of certain harmonious parts, a partial inequality of the string, or defect in the metal of the wire, must occasion a partial discordance in the sound proceeding from that part, and disturb the vibration of those parts which make up the Sound of the note; for a Note is not one simple sound, but a combination

combination of harmonious members, the most distinguished of which, are those of third, fifth, and eighth; with a fundamental tone as the basis. This automatical resolution of a musical string into such proportional parts, will, most probably, be looked upon as a supposition altogether imaginary; but the fact may, in some degree, be made evident to sight, by striking a musical wire of six or seven feet in length, properly strained over ledges, or what is called the trumpet marine, will exhibit different apparent openings between the several divisional points, instead of one uniform aperture of the whole wire, like the Fibres of a single Muscle; and these different divisions (if the eye is not deceived) appear to shift their places from one part of the wire to another, under one single impulse.

P S. You

P S. You will present the inclosed Letter to Mrs. J. which contains a clear and certain method of tuning the Harpsichord; it is due to her by Promise, and, I trust, will prevent many disappointments, to which she is sometimes obliged to submit, for want of a Rule of this sort.

LETTER

## LETTER XLII.

MADAM,

YOU now receive what I promised when I last had the pleasure of waiting upon you,—a certain and expeditious method of tuning the Harpsichord. You will please to observe then, that in tuning this Instrument, the chords are to be harmonized by tuning fifths from any one note, and that if these fifths might be tuned perfect, nothing would be more easy; but this will not answer; for when the fifths are tuned perfect, the Instrument as a *Whole* will be discordant, as you have often felt: in order, therefore, to render the Harpsichord agreeable, we must tune the fifths rather flat, and by pointing

pointing out a *certain* method of Proof, we may always determine whether they are *too* flat or *too* sharp. Let C be the note from which we begin, which may be determined by a musical fork, at concert pitch ; from C, tune a fifth up to G rather flat ; from G tune down an eighth, and from this lower G, tune upwards a fifth to D rather flat ; from D, tune a fifth upwards to A rather flat ; from A, tune down an eighth, and from this lower A, tune upwards a fifth to E rather flat ; strike this E together with C, which is the *1st Proof*, and if the Third be too sharp, the Fifths have not been tuned flat enough, and must be flattened till this Third become good. Having thus obtained E, tune a fifth to B, and if B is a good Third to G, which is your *2d Proof*, then this last fifth is properly tuned, if not, it must be altered till *this* third become



good; from *this* B, tune down an eighth, and from the *lower* B, tune a fifth to F sharp, which must be a good third to D, your *3d Proof*; from F sharp, tune a fifth upwards to C sharp, which will be a natural or sharp third to A, and is your *4th Proof*; from C sharp, tune *down* an eighth, and from this lower C sharp, tune a fifth to G sharp, which will be a third to E, and is your *5th Proof*.

Having thus tuned all the sharp Keys, we must now tune an eighth from the first C upwards, and from thence, tune a fifth down to F pretty close, till this F makes a good third to A, and from this F, likewise tune down a fifth to B flat, which will be a third to D; from B flat likewise, tune down a fifth to E flat, which will be a third to G.

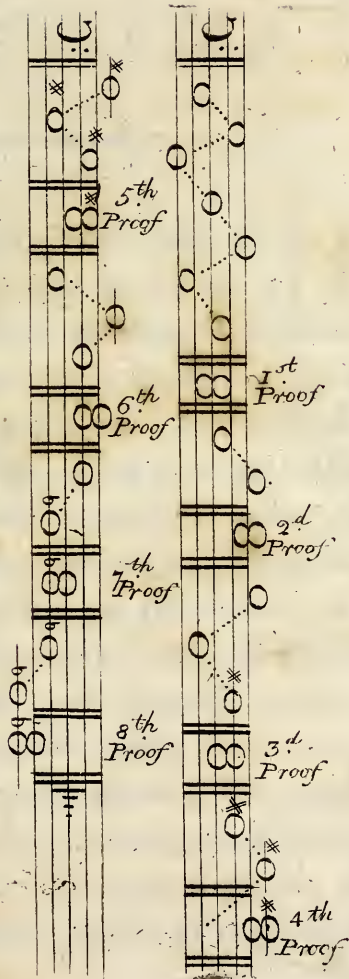
It only remains now, to tune Octaves, and the instrument will be as completely  
in

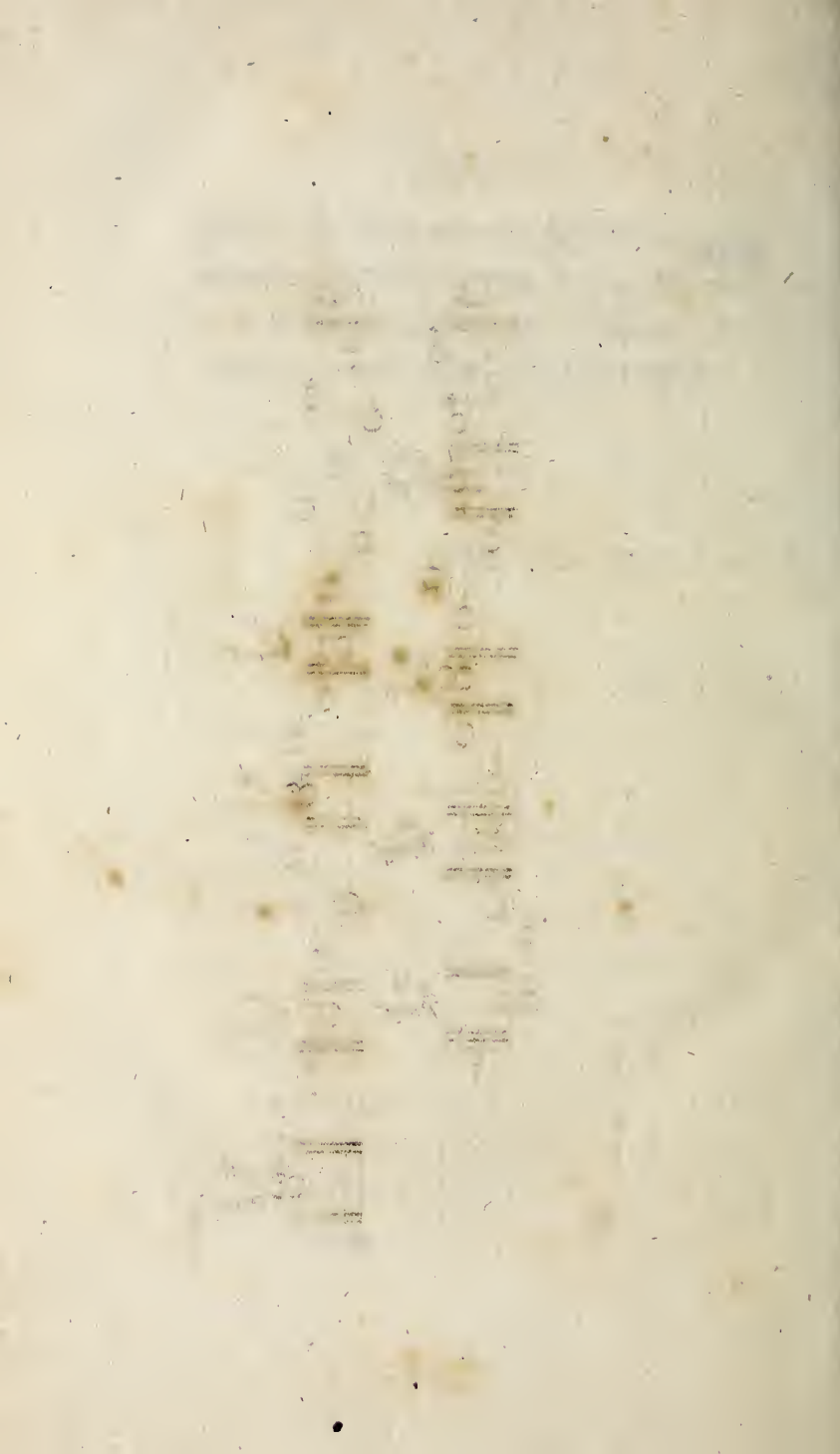
in tune as the nature of it will admit, that is upon which the same string is made to stand for the sharp of a note immediately below, and the flat of the note immediately above it, and which I have heard an excellent practical musician say, he thought was more agreeable to the ear, than if the instrument were actually constructed with a greater number of strings, so as to render it possible to be tuned with the most precise exactness. This is an affair which I leave to be determined by better judges than myself. The experiment hath been tried, and I can only say, that Harpsichords still retain their old construction in respect of flats and sharps, with the ablest Musicians, and those too who could well afford any Expence, and would spare none, to render the Instrument absolutely perfect. It seems odd to say, that it is more perfect upon account of this imperfection,

fection, but such was the expression of an *unmathematical* Musician, whose abilities as a Performer, and the judgment of whose ear, were never called in question.

I am, Madam, &c.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.







## P O S T S C R I P T,

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IF the Reader should think proper to correct, or at least to run his eye over the mistakes which are hereafter taken notice of, it may contribute to his perusal of the Letters with more satisfaction : It would be troubling him too much, to call for his attention to the correcting of accentual omissions, which were neglected in printing off the first sheets of this volume, at a time when the Author was less capable of attending to them, from the constant torments he endured ; and to say the truth, they were not duly regarded in his original papers. Since it hath pleased the divine Goodness to mitigate his pains, he hath been more careful in this respect  
and

and hath endeavoured, by a revifal, to render the *whole* work as worthy of the Public, as his condition and abilities will permit.

It muft be owned, that as he hath not been fo careful with regard to accents as was proper, fo he has been almoft as apparently indifferent with refpect to the pointing. Some hints of this fort are doubtlefs neceffary for the moft judicious readers, but it is his opinion, that if our points were ten times multiplied, they could not poffibly direct a perfon to read with fpirit, or with tolerable propriety; they would perhaps avail lefs than old Mace's or Geminiani's characters for playing upon the lute or violin with Taſte.—Elegance and force, in either caſe, muſt ſtill depend upon the reader's or the muſician's untaught feelings, ariſing from the delicacy of his ear, and the affections of his heart.

What

What errors are pointed out in the following Table, are chiefly those of the press, or in the manner of his expression, where the Writer thought it indeterminate; and indeed he ought to take some share of the Printer's faults upon himself, but trusts that he has left no mistakes uncorrected, which are of any importance.



## TABLE OF ERRORS.—VOL. I.

Page 15, line 17, add, 'for no more are necessary'; p. 27, l. 19, 20, the words Terence and Horace to change places; p. 28, l. 3, r. 'style'; p. 31, l. 5, for substantive, r. subjunctive; p. 31, l. 15, for several, r. different; p. 49, l. 7, for Gal. xi. 14, &c. r. Gal. ii. 14; p. 49, l. 12, for Rev. xi. r. Rev. ii.; p. 55, l. 21, for are, r. is; p. 56, l. 13, for that, r. a; p. 62, l. 16, r. ανακεφαλαιώσασθαι; p. 62, l. 19, dele first, p. 70, l. 11, r. τῷ μεγασθενῆς; p. 89, l. 7, r. αναμνησκομαι; p. 115, l. 21, r. 'was placed over them, as a hint to the reader'; p. 115, l. 22, r. 'in utterance might give'; p. 130, l. 19, r. 'system of divided notes'; p. 147, l. 15, r. 'ebriety'; p. 154, l. 12, r. 'of our'; p. 165, l. 22, dele mark of reference, which belongs to p. 166, l. 1; p. 169, l. 3, r. 'Quintilian'; p. 170, l. 12, 13, r. 'eadem, habet'; p. 172, l. 3, A Troche. streams that; p. 176, l. 18, r. 'our giving'; p. 180, l. 7, r. 'applied to style'; p. 201, l. 8, r. 'Hypolydian, Hyperlydian, the Æolian, &c.'; p. 211, l. 12, r. 'music of a State'; p. 280, l. 17, r. 'either to the metrical length, or to the accentual'; p. 290, l. 18, r. 'that works so artificial in their structure, &c.'; p. 290, l. 22, for its, r. the; p. 307, l. 18, r. 'no higher than a rule'; p. 318, l. 19, for to, r. their; p. 337, l. 22, r. 'scenes'; p. 349, l. 3, heavens; p. 365, l. 17, knewedst.

THE HISTORY OF THE  
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